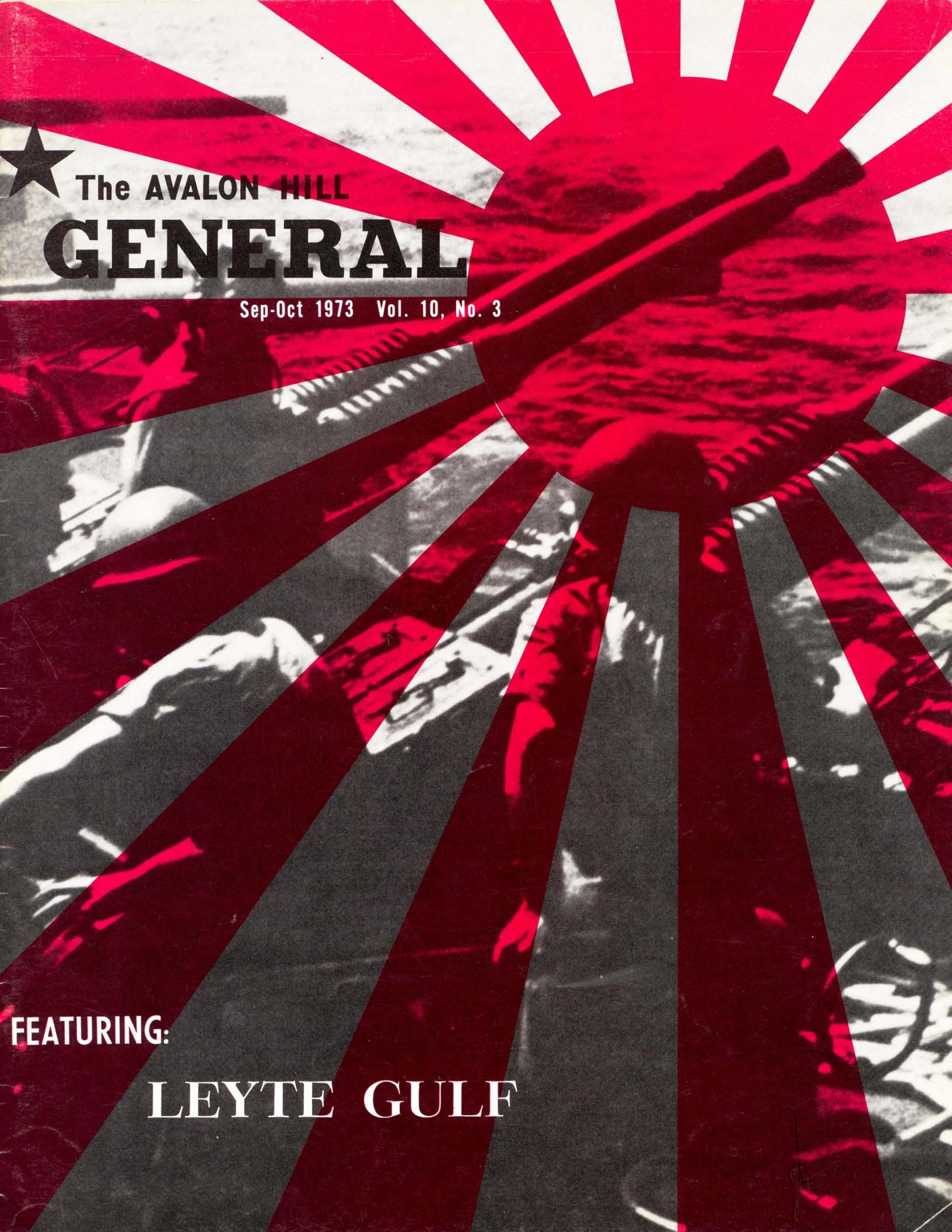




The AVALON HILL
GENERAL

Sep-Oct 1973 Vol. 10, No. 3



FEATURING:

LEYTE GULF

The AVALON HILL GENERAL

The Game Players Magazine

The Avalon Hill GENERAL is dedicated to the presentation of authoritative articles on the strategy, tactics, and variation of Avalon Hill games of strategy. Historical articles are included only inasmuch as they provide useful background information on current Avalon Hill titles. THE GENERAL is published by the Avalon Hill Company solely for the cultural edification of the serious game aficionado, in the hopes of improving the game owner's proficiency of play and providing services not otherwise available to the Avalon Hill game buff.

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Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 40

A COMPLETE GAME IN THE GENERAL?

Well, not quite but it's as close as we've ever come to having one. We are still definitely against the printing of games in a gaming magazine simply because there is no way such games can be playtested sufficiently prior to publication to insure that they are good games. Therefore, our efforts in this field will be limited to games of the "variant" class such as is found in this issue.

"LEYTE GULF" is more than the standard variant however. It requires alterations to the MIDWAY mapboard, many more counters, and considerable shuffling of the rules. The basic game system is still that of MIDWAY however and the MIDWAY game is needed to play it. What will your reaction be to this type of lead article? Quite honestly, we don't know. That's why we tried—to find out. Your response in the next Readers Response should dictate what course we follow in this regard in the future.

We think "Leyte Gulf" is an interesting little variant, and a welcome change of pace from what might be becoming your stereotyped MIDWAY game. Due to the limited naval titles in our line at present and the fact that MIDWAY was published before the era of "scenarios" we decided to go ahead and give it a trial run. The game can be very deceiving at first glance. Just as many people thought MIDWAY was an easy Jap win, so will many of you think that Leyte Gulf is a hopeless Japanese defeat. The odds may well be with the American player but by adroit use of his advantages, the Jap can occasionally sneak out a win—despite the hordes of American aircraft. This is definitely not the type of game we would come out with under the AH label, but as a magazine variant it proves most interesting.

Largely because of the inclusion of the game in this issue, several regular features are conspicuous by their absence. To make room for the Leyte Gulf counters we had to drop the Readers Response and the Contest reply cards in this issue. Both will return in the November issue and, for this issue only, we will accept facsimiles of the contest. The Series Replay also departs from its regular format this time to experiment with a new concept in presentation. We'll be asking you for your opinions on the relative merits of presentation in the next Reader's Response. Meantime, we'll be proceeding with the return to the MIDWAY-style format exhibited in the last issue which seemed to draw raves from almost everybody. And we do have some really top-notch matches in progress between name players. The problem is, as we've said before, the lead time required to get these pbm games into print.

Moving on now to the Reader's Response we find a number of interesting statistics resulting from the August survey. The feature article again topped the honors in the voting for best article although it was actually topped in first place ballots by the Series Replay. The results of our random sample of 200 showed the following:

LUFTWAFFE ANALYSIS	362
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CAMPAIGN AT WATERLOO — Part V	264
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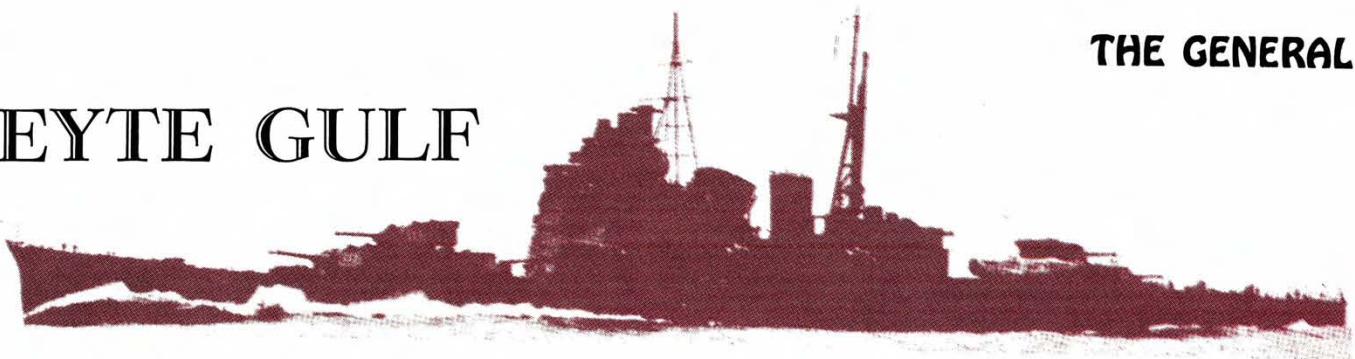
The issue as a whole garnered a 3.41 rating compared to the June issue rating of 3.81. 72% of you indicated that the last issue was better than its predecessor, while only 40% indicated they were taking advantage of the 2 for 1 deal whereby if they get a new subscriber their subscription is extended free. It's too bad because the offer will not be made again after April.

Which brings up the argument we often hear at conventions — that the GENERAL shows a big profit. Case in point: take a \$2.50 (2 for 1 deal) subscription, subtract \$1.50 for the discount coupons, cross out another .96¢ for mailing it third class during the course of a year. That leaves 4¢. Out of that we must pay printing, collating, addressing, paper and envelope costs, not to mention graphics, salaries and the dozens of free games given away as prizes. It takes no mental giant to see that even at the regular \$5.00 price Avalon Hill goes in the hole on each and every issue — a sacrifice willingly made to promote the art. So much for digression.

Another one of the gripes people have had with AH is the way in which game questions are answered. In the past, this "nut mail" as it is called around here was farmed out to a number of different wargamers to answer. The result was obvious, conflicting answers on the same questions. This situation was remedied over a year ago when the R&D staff was expanded and provisions made for answering questions as part of the Staff's daily duties, and the situation is much better now, albeit still far from perfect. Because different members of the staff specialize on different games and also due to the resulting interruption it causes, we ask that you do not phone us on questions. The "nut mail" is sorted according to game, and delivered to the proper authority every Friday for answering. This means that most questions are answered in the space of 2 weeks — barring an unusually heavy work schedule for a certain authority at that time. For example, Bulge questions may be slow in being answered when Randy Reed is approaching the deadline for his next game. Stalingrad questions have a tendency to be slowed down when the GENERAL is behind schedule. Only Tom Oleson, our resident Anzio authority seems immune from this type of priority commitments, and even he goes on vacation once in a while. But one thing is sure, without a stamped, self-addressed envelope and proper diagrams your chances of getting a reply are greatly reduced.

Going on with the Reader Response we found that 90% of you actually do read that microscopic

LEYTE GULF



by Robert D. Harmon

For four days in October of 1944, there occurred what may be said to be the greatest naval battle in history. Hundreds of ships were engaged over an area stretching 1000 miles. Theoretically, the US naval forces, with their array of mass-produced might, should have had an easy time of it. But it didn't quite work out that way.

THE PRELIMINARIES

The strategic situation at Leyte Gulf was built upon an operations plan, a conference, and two battles. The first incident, of course, was the Battle of the Phillipine Sea (19-21 June, 1944), more commonly known as "The Great Marianas Turkey Shoot."

BACKGROUND: After the great naval battles of 1942, the protagonists found themselves badly weakened. The problem was a lack of carriers; of the entire prewar US carrier fleet, only the *Enterprise* was left — *Saratoga* was laid up with torpedo damage; *Hornet*, *Lexington*, *Yorktown*, and *Wasp* were gone. Five Japanese carriers were gone, others were out with battle damage, and, more seriously, Japan's decimated air groups had run short of both planes and experienced aviators.

Both sides spent 1943 rebuilding their forces. The Americans, with Guadalcanal out of the way, made limited advances in Japan's outer dominions — the Gilberts, the Solomons, New Guinea, the Aleutians.

Then, Adm. Nimitz' forces in the central Pacific struck deep into Japanese territory, landing on Saipan, Guam, and Tinian in the Marianas Islands. The long wait was over.

The "Turkey Shoot" was just that. The Japanese fleet hurled itself upon a new generation of US ships — and the result was utter ruination. Over 400 Japanese aircraft were shot down attempting to get at the US fleet. And the Japanese fleet suffered terribly — carriers *Shokaku* and *Taiho* were sunk by US submarines, and the light carrier *Hiyo* was sunk by US planes during the retreat. The US fleet was virtually unscathed.

It would be the last time that Japanese carriers offered battle as an effective striking force.

Gen. Tojo's government collapsed as a result of the Turkey Shoot.

In a series of behind-the-scenes talks among the American high command, culminating at the Octagon Conference at Quebec (Sept. '44), the following decisions were reached:

- 1) Gen. MacArthur's forces would land on Morotai that month, while
- 2) Adm. Nimitz' forces would land on Ulithi and Peleliu, bypassing Yap, and then
- 3) the two forces would converge, bypassing Mindanao to land on the island of Leyte in the Philippines

Although the Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. King, argued strenuously for bypassing the Philippines in favor of landings on Formosa and mainland China, it was obvious that, aside from the dubious nature of operating against the Asian mainland, the US was committed to liberating the Philippines. It was US territory; its inhabitants had loyally resisted Japanese occupation. MacArthur wanted to return to them as he had promised, so long ago. There was no choice.

Meanwhile, the new Japanese government had drawn up four SHO ("Victory") contingency plans, to deal with possible US landings on 1) the Philippines, 2) Formosa or the Ryukyu Islands, 3) the Japanese home islands, or 4) Hokkaido and/or the Kurile Islands. Of the four, the first possibility seemed likely. SHO-1 called for the concentration of all available land-based aircraft in the Philippines, mainly from Formosa; this was to be followed by the entire Imperial fleet. The objective: destroy the US landing forces — at any cost.

The fall of Morotai (a potential bomber base) and the superb anchorage at Ulithi posed a direct threat to the Philippines. Japanese Army commanders began to call for activation of SHO-1. Tokyo stalled, for the Americans had not yet appeared. Then, on 10 Octobér, Adm. Halsey's 3rd Fleet announced itself off Formosa.

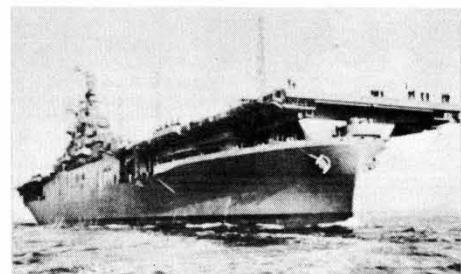
The week of 10-17 October saw strikes on Japanese aerodromes on Okinawa, Formosa, and Luzon. But the main fighting took place around Formosa, where Halsey's airmen took on Vice-Adm. Fukudome's 2nd Air Fleet. A furious air battle took place, and Adm. Toyoda, Navy Commander-in-Chief, decided to gamble for a quick victory by rushing the carrier fleet's half-trained squadrons to Formosa. The results: close to 600 Japanese aircraft downed, as opposed to the Americans' 79. Two damaged US cruisers limped back to Ulithi but the Japanese somehow got the notion that 11 US carriers had been sunk.

Certainly, 1000 land-based aircraft had attacked Halsey; from the way the Japanese reacted they must have believed that an invasion was coming and was stopped by quick action on their part. In actuality, Halsey had more than accomplished his mission: Fukudome was able to offer only feeble support to the Philippines — and the carrier forces were toothless. But Halsey's retirement enabled the Japanese to convince themselves that they had driven him off. Then, on 17 October, came the bitter awakening.

MEN AND MACHINES

The reason for the stunning American victories — the Turkey Shoot and Formosa — was due to the late Adm. Yamamoto's dire predictions of American industrial resurgence. Long past were the desperate days of 1942, when a few carriers and green pilots were all that held back the invincible Imperial Navy.

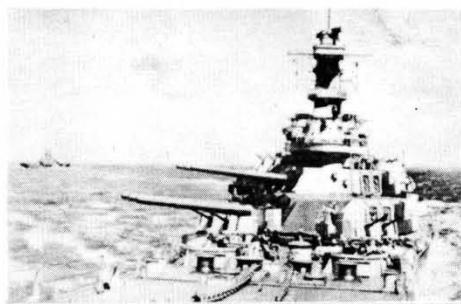
America had spent 1942 and 1943 replacing her early losses with a large second generation of flattops — spearheaded by the *Essex* class. These were formidable — 27,100 tons displacement, well-armed, capable of holding over 100 aircraft. With them were the *Independence*-class light carriers, eight of which were available to Halsey along with the eight fleet carriers of the *Essex* and pre-war classes. Conversions of light cruisers, these CVLs were better in every respect than their Japanese counterparts — fast, capable of carrying 35 planes, displacing some 11,000 tons.



The *Essex* class carrier alone outnumbered all Japanese attempts at carrier production. First launched in July 1942, the *Essex* proved to be superior to anything the Japanese could produce. Displacing 39,800 tons with a complement of 3,460, these vessels maintained their place in the fleet with a speed of 33 knots. Each vessel was protected by eight 5-inch guns, and 28 50mm guns, and carried 80 aircraft.

Then there were the highly numerous escort carriers — conversions of merchant vessels, or, later on, ready-made ships, capable of holding 15-20 aircraft. These were slow and weak but had their uses — landing support and CAP, convoy duty, and, in their most effective role, as U-boat killers. They displaced about 7,000 tons.

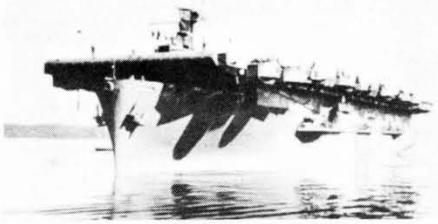
There were other vessels — brand-new battleships of the *Iowa* and *Massachusetts* classes. Fast, powerful, bristling with radar and AA guns, they offered a formidable challenge to any Japanese units, ashore, afloat, or airborne. Beside the battlewagons were myriads of new cruisers, destroyers, and transports.



The *Iowa* and her 5 sister ships were more than a match for anything the Japanese had to offer, save the *Yamato*. More importantly, with her 20 5-inch guns, sixty 40mm and sixty 20 mm AA guns, these vessels presented a tremendous obstacle to Japanese aircraft as evidenced by the "Turkey Shoot." Capable of 33 knots, they displaced 57,450 tons and carried a crew of 2,753.

THE GENERAL

In the air, the US Navy was no longer inferior, in either numbers or quality. The Navy had acquired good torpedoes at last, and an excellent torpedo bomber to carry them — the TBF (and TBM) Avenger. The divebombers had also been replaced — the SBD Dauntless had been replaced by the SB2C Helldiver; not much of an improvement, but the Avengers could carry the ball if necessary. And, best of all, the Navy now had the Grumman F6F Hellcat — the first American fighter able to beat the Zero on its own terms.



The CVE.73 *Gambier Bay*, sunk by combined cruiser gunfire off Samar in the battle of Leyte Gulf, was just one of fifty "Casablanca" class escort carriers built by the United States during the war. The most remarkable statistic about these craft was the production rate; towards the end they were being built in less than 4 months; a rate of production that turned even the Japanese kamikaze tactics into a futile effort. Displacing barely 10,000 tons loaded and capable of only 19 knots, these vessels were far removed from their superior sisters in the *Essex* class. Each vessel could carry 28 aircraft and was armed with a single 5 inch gun, 16 40mm and 24 20mm A.A. guns. The wartime crew was 860.

All through the first two years of the war, the Zero had terrorized the Pacific — the Navy's F4F and F4U fighters, and the Army's P-38 Lightning, eventually were able to offer the enemy an even match. Now the Hellcat, fast, maneuverable, well-armed, outmatched the Zero in every way, and made American CAPs virtually impenetrable. Thus the Turkey Shoot. Thus the orgy of plane-smashing over Formosa.

The Japanese still had a number of carriers, despite the losses of '42 and the Turkey Shoot. But the *Zuikaku*, last survivor of the Pearl Harbor carriers, was the only big flattop available. Not that it mattered. One thousand planes had gone down since June, and now there were virtually no planes for the carriers to launch.

Japan did not have America's superiority in machines; the Imperial fleet could no longer beat the US in even battle. But Japan, its home islands threatened, faced with defeat for the first time in two millenia, fell back on its ancient customs — on the Bushido code of the nation, on the samurai spirit shrouded in antiquity. The Navy could not destroy the enemy. Very well. Then it would, in one vast act of self-immolation, hurl itself upon the enemy and wreck the invasion at all costs. The Japanese armed forces might die, but perhaps their sacrifice would save their homeland. The Navy girded for self-sacrifice, especially a new squadron in the Philippines, known as the Kamikaze.

The idea had originated with Vice-Adm. Ohnishi, commander of the 1st Air Fleet at Clark AFB in the Philippines. What more effective way of utilizing what few aircraft were left than plunging them, bombload and all, into the enemy ships? Twenty-three men volunteered for this first suicide unit, named Kamikaze in honor of the "Divine Wind" that had broken the Mongol invasion in 1281.

THE LANDINGS, AND FIRST ENGAGEMENTS: PALAWAN PASSAGE, SIBUYAN SEA

While Halsey's 3rd Fleet moved down from Formosa in support, Gen. MacArthur's forces launched the assault on Leyte, center island in the Philippines. Appearing on 17 October, 7th Fleet units under Vice-Adm. Kinkaid bombarded the island and fought off some feeble strikes by Japanese Army air units. On the 20th, units of Lt.-Gen. Kreuger's 6th Army landed at Dulag and Tacloban. Over 100,000 troops were to land in the next three days.

SHO-1 went into effect.

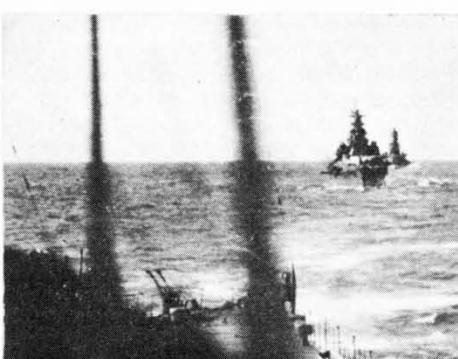
From the home islands, the Carrier Force, led by Vice-Adm. Ozawa, headed south into the open Pacific. Ozawa, whose defeat at the Turkey Shoot had been through no fault of his own, was headed — with virtually no air units — into a familiar predicament. This time, he was to lure Halsey away from Leyte, whatever it cost. He and his carriers were bait.

From Lingga Roads, near Singapore, the main Japanese battle fleet steamed north to Brunei to refuel. On the morning of 22 Oct., they set sail, and divided. Force C, under Vice-Adm. Nishimura, was to sail across the Sulu Sea and approach the invasion area from the south, by way of the Surigao Strait. Force A (the Center Force), under Vice-Adm. Kurita, was to sail along the west edge of Palawan, then swing below Mindoro, cross the Sibuyan Sea, and approach the beaches from the north, by way of San Bernardino Strait.

From the Pescadores came Vice-Adm. Shima's 2nd Striking Force, consisting of two cruisers; Shima was to support Nishimura.

The objective: Leyte Gulf, choked with transports, LSTs, landing craft; the beaches piled high with supplies and ammunition. Destroy all this, and MacArthur would find his troops on another Bataan. Before dawn on 23 Oct., the Japanese were sighted. Two US submarines, *Darter* and *Dace*, reported a large formation off Palawan, moving north. The submarines promptly attacked. *Darter*'s first shots sank *Atago*, the enemy flagship; Kurita and his staff wound up in the drink. In the resulting melee, the cruiser *Maya* was sunk by *Dace*; *Maya*'s sister ship *Takao* was sent limping back to Brunei with two hits; *Dace* ran aground and was abandoned after *Darter* evacuated the crew. Kurita eventually continued north, his flag on the *Yamato*.

More important than the loss of three cruisers, the Americans were alerted. Halsey moved his three available task groups into the waters off the eastern Philippines; a fourth task group bound for Ulithi was recalled. But before Halsey could get



Vice Adm. Kurita's force underway on October 23rd. None of the pictured vessels would survive the week.

off his strike, land-based Japanese aircraft struck at TG 3 just after dawn on the 24th. CAP Hellcats knocked down or drove off all of Ohnishi's and Fukudome's planes — all but one.

Just as the CAP was being recovered, a lone Judy divebomber dropped out of a cloud bank and scored a direct hit on the light carrier *Princeton*. For a while, it looked like the carrier could be saved, and the cruiser *Birmingham*, her decks and fantail crowded with rescue and damage-control parties, moved in to help. Then, *Princeton*'s after torpedo storage exploded, fatally injuring the carrier and mowing down 800 of the *Birmingham*'s crew.

Vengeance was quickly exacted. By 0900 the first strikes took off against Kurita, now headed east through the Sibuyan Sea. Although the Japanese had heavily reinforced their AA, the barrage had little effect. The Americans concentrated on the two monsters towering over the fleet — *Yamato* and *Musashi*. *Yamato* escaped with superficial damage; *Musashi* went down that afternoon with 19 torpedoes and 17 bombs in her — a quick end to a short career. *Myoko* was badly damaged and was sent home. Kurita continued on, delayed but not daunted. The Americans, believing that Kurita would have the good sense to retire, shifted their attention to Nishimura, sighted late on the 24th, headed for Surigao Strait.

THE BATTLE OF SURIGAO STRAIT

Nishimura was close at hand, and steaming with singleminded resolve for the invasion fleet just beyond Surigao Strait, between Leyte and Mindanao. A brief air strike from *Enterprise* had proven ineffective. Adm. Kinkaid had gotten as much air support as Halsey could give him; now a night surface battle was pending. Close at hand were the 7th Fleet fire-support units, four Allied cruisers and six battleships under Rear-Adm. Oldendorf. The battleships were tubby old relics of Pearl Harbor, but weren't much older than Force C's two battleships. Besides, the American vessels had been fitted with radar fire-control systems. Oldendorf arrayed his force across the end of the Strait and waited.

First contact was made at midnight, when Nishimura encountered Oldendorf's PT-boats. Nishimura brushed them aside (later, PT-137 torpedoed light cruiser *Abukuma*, of Shima's 2nd Striking Force, coming up-channel some time after Nishimura).

At 0300 Oldendorf's destroyer screen attacked Force C, sinking 3 destroyers and fatally torpedoing the battleship *Fuso*. At one stroke, Nishimura's force was reduced to three ships: battleship *Yamashiro* (damaged in the attack), cruiser *Mogami*, and the destroyer *Shigure*. The Americans retired unharmed.

Finally, at 0350, Nishimura reached the American battle line, lying at a right angle to his approach. As at Tsushima and Jutland, a 'crossing of the T' had been achieved. The result was terrible. *Yamashiro*, battered to scrap by gunfire and harried by destroyers, went down at 0415. *Mogami*, seriously damaged, fought her way out and retired with *Shigure*. The Americans suffered only comparatively minor losses — severe damage to the destroyer *Albert W. Grant*, caught in the crossfire and riddled by both fleets. Oldendorf set out in pursuit of the enemy.

Mogami, heading south away from the battle, ran into Shima. Quite literally, that is — just as

she had done at Midway. Shima's flagship, the cruiser *Nachi*, had made the mistake of assuming the *Mogami* to be halted. She wasn't, and rammed the *Nachi*. This was the climax of a bad night for Shima — first, Nishimura had not bothered to rendezvous with him; then the *Abukuma* was hit. Now this.

Shima chose to retire. Aircraft from Kinkaid's escorts caught *Mogami* on the morning of the 25th and finished her off.

Kinkaid's southern flank had been successfully covered that night, but now Oldendorf had been pulled out of position. The San Bernardino Strait, some distance to the north on the other side of Samar, was unguarded. But perhaps Halsey would cover —

Where was Halsey?

THE BATTLE OF CAPE ENGANO

The one catch in the victory at the Turkey Shoot had been that the Navy's air units had bagged only one Japanese light carrier. Adm. Spruance, mindful of his original mission — to support invasion — had not pursued Ozawa. Despite the massive Japanese aircraft losses, this had rankled. Halsey, among others, had been critical of what seemed a lost chance. The Japanese carrier force was still at large, and Halsey was ever-mindful of this; his air patrols to the north had been maintained even during the air battles of the 24th. Late that afternoon, Ozawa was sighted heading south, and Halsey, assuming Kurita to be crippled, went north seeking a showdown. What he had no way of knowing was that: 1) Kurita was far from ineffective 2) Kinkaid, thinking that Halsey would leave his Battle Line off San Bernardino Strait, did not send picket vessels or aerial patrols there; and 3) Ozawa's decks were virtually empty.

By 0710 the enemy had been spotted; the first strike brushed aside Ozawa's CAP and closed in, sinking *Chitose*. Subsequent strikes that morning disabled *Chiyoda* and lightcruiser *Tama*, while Halsey, ignoring frantic pleas from Kinkaid, closed in with his surface fleet for the kill. Finally, Halsey got this message from Nimitz, after several requests from Kinkaid for the Battle Line (Task Force 34), at 10 a.m.: "Where is TF 34? The world wonders." TF 34 was promptly detached, along with a carrier task group.

Later air strikes sank *Zuikaku* and *Zuiho*. *Chiyoda* was abandoned by Ozawa and was sunk by Halsey's cruisers. *Hyuga* and *Ise* defended themselves successfully, retiring with both light cruisers despite heavy US air attacks. Ozawa, having pulled Halsey out of position, could leave; he broke contact after dark.

And TF 34 reached San Bernardino Straits at 0100, 26 October — three hours after Kurita's force had escaped through it, after engaging Kinkaid's carriers.

THE BATTLE OFF SAMAR

While Halsey raced north scenting blood, and Oldendorf was becoming the last admiral in naval history to use Battle Line surface tactics, Kurita steamed undetected through San Bernardino Strait on the night of 24/25 Oct., turning south along the coast of Samar. By dawn he was in Kinkaid's rear.

The first ships Kurita encountered were Carrier Group 77.4.3 (known by its radio callsign as "Taffy 3"), consisting of 6 escort carriers and a destroyer screen. Sighting Kurita at dawn, Rear-Adm. Clifton Sprague, commander of Taffy 3,

ordered out every plane he had, turned away from the enemy, and threw out smoke screens. The Japanese were faster. Taffy 3 dodged into a rain squall at 0715, and Sprague, to save his carriers, ordered his destroyers to attack.

A two-hour melee followed, during which the Japanese formation broke up in confusion. *Yamato* and *Nagato* turned abruptly and left the scene, avoiding the destroyers' torpedoes; *Kumano* was damaged; *Suzuya* was mortally damaged by the attack. The rest of the formation, grappling with destroyers and harried by planes from Taffy 2 and 3, fell behind the carriers.

The destroyer screen paid for its bravery — two destroyers and a destroyer escort were sunk by massed gunfire. But most of the attack was turned aside. Not all of it, though.

Despite a pounding from aircraft, *Tone*, *Haguro*, *Chokai*, and *Chikuma* managed to close in on the carriers and add their fire to the occasional shots from the distant battleships. The carrier *Kalinin Bay* was damaged; then, at 0900 *Gambier Bay* went down under fire from *Chikuma*. The carriers were quickly avenged; *Chikuma* and *Chokai* were sunk by Avengers and gunfire from the carriers.

Then, inexplicably, *Tone* and *Haguro* broke off the attack; Kurita had decided to retire. On the other side of the horizon, Kurita had, by his muddled communications, been convinced that the enemy was outrunning his ships (they weren't). Unhappy tidings had just come in from Adm. Shima; no doubt Oldendorf now waited at Leyte with open arms. It had been a difficult cruise, starting with Palawan Passage; Kurita, lacking the single-mindedness of Nishimura, chose the better part of valor.

The Japanese ships were in retirement, but the battle was not over. While Taffy 3 had been occupied with Kurita, Taffy 1 had been the recipient of the first Kamikaze attack of the Pacific war. Striking at dawn, the Kamikazes had damaged carriers *Santee* and *Suwannee*. Taffy 3 had been less fortunate: half an hour after Kurita disappeared over the horizon the Kamikazes had closed in, damaging *Kitkun Bay* and sinking the *St. Lo*.



Most of the early Kamikaze craft were obsolete multi-engined bombers such as this *Frances* shown burning just prior to its mid-air explosion.

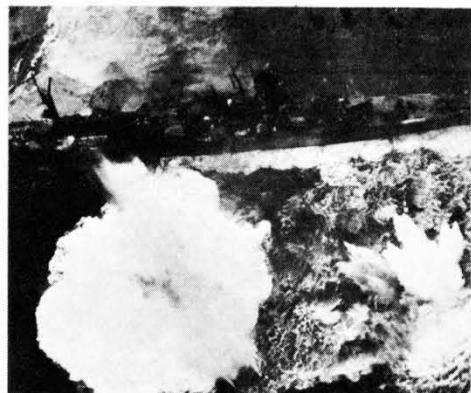
At a small cost, the Kamikazes had sunk a carrier and damaged three others. The first Kamikaze unit had proven the worth of this desperate measure — many others would follow them in the remaining 10 months of war.

AFTERMATH

The US Fleet stayed in the area for the next few weeks, giving Krueger support, and following up on the victory. Light cruiser *Noshiro* went down during a strike on Kurita on 26 October. *Kumano* received several attacks over the next several weeks, but got as far as Lingayen before it was sunk 25 Nov. by planes from *Ticonderoga*.

Of Shima's forces, *Abukuma* was caught by 5th and 13th Air Force B-24s from Morotai and sunk 26 October; the *Nachi*, damaged by the *Mogami*, limped to Manila and was sunk there 5 November.

Ozawa made it back to Japan, but not before losing the crippled *Tama* to a US submarine en route.



The light cruiser *Noshiro* never stood much of a chance against Allied air superiority. It is shown here under attack on October 26th. Moments later the attacking Helldivers found the mark and sent her to her grave.

Japan was now left with three operational "carriers," *Hyuga*, *Ise*, and *Hosho*. There were also four battleships left — *Yamato*, *Nagato*, *Kongo*, and *Haruna*, and a handful of undamaged cruisers. Except for the futile, doomed sally of the *Yamato* in April of '45, the Japanese navy never again offered open battle. Losing the Marianas had meant that 20th Air Force B-29s could ravage the ports and shipyards; losing the Philippines had meant that there was no oil available from the Indies, no ships to burn it, no planes for them to launch.

MacArthur would go on to secure all the Philippines (which took until August) and contemplate a landing on Honshu; Nimitz would move against Iwo Jima and Okinawa. As far as Leyte was concerned, it was all over but the shouting.

Recriminations flew on both sides. Kurita was relieved of command and given a desk job. Halsey was accused of stranding Kinkaid without support; Kinkaid was accused of negligence in failing to cover San Bernardino Strait. On the other hand, there is no denying the bravery shown by the sailors and airmen on both sides. But for one side, it was an exercise in futility; on the other, the price of miscalculation.

Bluejackets' Manual 1940

Aircraft Carrier: The Majestic Weapon

Donald Macintyre

Leyte Gulf: Armada in the Pacific

Donald Macintyre

The Battle of Leyte Gulf

Samuel Eliot Morison

The Liberation of the Philippines

Samuel Eliot Morison

The Two-Ocean War

Samuel Eliot Morison

Greatest Fighter Missions

Edward H. Sims



A B C A B C

D E F D E F

G H I G H I

A B C A B C

D E F D E F

G H I G H I

SOUTH CHINA SEA

A B C A B C A B C A B C A

D E F D E F D E F D E F D

G H I G H I I G G H I G H I G

A B C A B C A C A B B C A B C A

D E F D E F E F D E F D E F D

G H I G H I I G H I G H I G G

MANILA H Bay

Luzon

Mindoro

SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT

Palawan

Panay

Samar

Leyte

Gulf

Cebu

Nebros

Surigato STRAIT

Mindanao

SULU SEA

G H I G H I G H I G

A B C A B C A B C A B C A

D E F D E F D E F D E F D

G H I G H I I G H I G H I G G

The game of *Midway* offers many fine features and is an enjoyable game on its own merits. But some players may wish for a little change from a nervous slugfest between a vulnerable fleet and an outnumbered one, or variations on that theme.

I offer such a change — a Leyte variant recreating the 1944 battle on the Midway board. The basic rules are the same, but the situation and course of play are radically different.

So, here are the blueprints for a naval Armageddon, playable on your own *Midway* game and bloody enough to warm any wargamer's heart.

RULES:

All Avalon Hill rules are in force, except as follows:

The Japanese fleet may enter anywhere on the west or north edge of the search board, on or after 0500 23 Oct. The Japanese can also start up to 5 ships in Manila Bay (square C2H).

The U.S. 5th Fleet and accompanying CVE units start within 3 squares of Leyte Gulf (squares E5I and E6C), from where they may move freely. The U.S. 3rd Fleet may start anywhere in or east of row D, but may not set up within 3 squares of land. Once entered, no units may leave the board.

JAPANESE AIR OPERATIONS:

Japanese air units cannot return to carriers after a strike (due to pilots being inexperienced at navigation and deck landing). They may shuttle from carriers to Clark Air Force Base (square C2E) and vice versa, or may operate out of Clark exclusively. As such, the Japanese do not have to reveal the location of their carriers after launching a strike. When spotted, the Japanese player need not report exact information. He may underestimate and/or exaggerate the numbers of his force by 50%. However, he must report if any carriers are present.

Only T, F, and D squadrons may operate from CV's. B (land based aircraft) squadrons are strictly limited to operating from Clark AFB with a range of 10 squares each way. K (Kamikaze; each factor = 1 aircraft) units have a total range of 14 squares, as do CV-based aircraft. Kamikaze units are land-based. The American player is prohibited to bomb Clark AFB or fly one-way (suicide) missions.

B squadrons are counted as dive-bombers on the Battle Board. T, F, and D squadrons may be divided up in any manner between Clark AFB and the ships, subject to capacity restrictions. This applies to setup and play, except where prohibited by range considerations.

KAMIKAZES:

Kamikaze attacks may be launched during air operations on any turn. The attack is launched in the same manner as any air operation, and may be launched in conjunction with any other air strikes, except that once launched no Kamikaze may land. On the battle-board, Kamikazes may attack from front, side, rear, or overhead even if other aircraft are in the same square or attacking the same ship. Just as an anvil attack is 2 (or more) separate attacks, Kamikaze factors attack in separate attacks and may not combine with other units.

AA against Kamikaze factors is 1 AA factor per ship, regardless of amount. If two ships fire at one Kamikaze, the battle is 1-2. If one ship fires, or if no ship fires at all, the battle is 1-1 with 1 Kamikaze. U.S. CAP functions in the normal manner — i.e., if 1 Kamikaze attacks 1

ship and 3 fighters, it goes in the drink automatically. Kamikaze attack is resolved on the same table as normal air attacks.

AIR SEARCH:

The U.S. player may make 3 air searches per daylight turn and 1 air search per night turn (as long as the USS Independence is still afloat). The U.S. may search only within 4 areas (12 squares) of his units. The Japanese may make 3 air searches per day turn, anywhere on the board — in or east of row G only. The Japanese player must be automatically informed of all units within one square of any land. If the Japanese player searches west of row G he must have a vessel within 12 squares of the area searched.

STRATEGIC FACTORS:

Each Japanese ship has a Strategic Factor (SF) which it can employ against Leyte Gulf or CVE's

THE GENERAL

when in the same square. The SF, used only on the search board, is as follows: CVL, CL = $\frac{1}{2}$ factor; CV, CA = 1 SF factor; XCV/BB = $\frac{1}{2}$ SF factors; BB = 2 SF factors; Yamato and Musashi = 3 SF factors each. Every 10 factors of T, D, or B aircraft equals 2 SF factors.

LEYTE GULF REDUCTION:

Each square of Leyte Gulf contains (although there are no counters there) American transports, supply vessels, and beaches piled with material. Each square has a total reduction factor of 10. The Reduction Factor (RF) goes down 1 for each SF in that square at the end of the turn. The Japanese get 3 victory points for each RF destroyed; if both squares of Leyte Gulf are completely reduced they automatically win. The American player may assign a CAP over Leyte Gulf squares. For each 10 factors of CAP

HIT RECORD

JAPANESE HIT RECORD

Zuikaku 10	■■■■■	Yamato 10	■■■■■■■■■■	Tone 3	■■■
Zuiho 6	■■■	Nagato 8	■■■■■■■■	Takao 3	■■■
Chitose 6	■■■	Kongo 6	■■■■■■■■	Maya 3	■■■
Chiyoda 6	■■■	Haruna 6	■■■■■■■■	Nachi 3	■■■
Hyuga 7	■■■■■	Atago 4	■■■■	Ashigara 3	■■■
Ise 7	■■■■■	Chokai 3	■■■■	Abukuma 2	■■■
Musashi 10	■■■■■■■■■■	Myoko 3	■■■■	Isuzu 2	■■■
Fuso 7	■■■■■■■■	Haguro 3	■■■■	Oyoda 2	■■■
Yamashira 7	■■■■■■■■	Chikuma 3	■■■■	Tama 2	■■■

AIRCRAFT CAPACITIES

Zuikaku: 21 Chitose: 10 Chiyoda: 10 Zuiho: 8 Hyuga: 3 Ise: 3
CLARK AFB: Unlimited

TOTAL AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE

Distributed in any manner subject to AIRCRAFT CAPACITY limits: T10 F22 D15 K20 B10

TIME RECORD

0500 Oct 23	0700	0900	1100	1300	1500	1700	Night Oct 23	0500	0700	0900	1100	1300	1500	1700	Night Oct 24	0500	0700	0900	1100	1300	1500	1700	Night Oct 25	0500	0700	0900	1100	1300	1500	1700	Night Oct 26	0500	0700	0900	1100	1300

3RD FLEET:

Enterprise 10	■■■■■	Washington 9	■■■■■■■■■■
Essex 12	■■■■■■	Alabama 9	■■■■■■■■■■
Wasp 12	■■■■■■	Wichita 4	■■■■■■■■■■
Hornet 12	■■■■■■	New Orleans 4	■■■■■■■■■■
Lexington 12	■■■■■■	Pensacola 3	■■■■■■■■■■
Hancock 12	■■■■■■	Chester 4	■■■■■■■■■■
Intrepid 12	■■■■■■	Salt Lake City 4	■■■■■■■■■■
Franklin 12	■■■■■■	Independence 7	■■■■■■■■■■
Iowa 10	■■■■■■■■■■	Belleau Wood 7	■■■■■■■■■■
New Jersey 10	■■■■■■■■■■	San Jacinto 7	■■■■■■■■■■
Massachusetts 9	■■■■■■■■■■	Princeton 7	■■■■■■■■■■
South Dakota 9	■■■■■■■■■■	Monterey 7	■■■■■■■■■■

UNITED STATES HIT RECORD

Washington 9	■■■■■■■■■■	Cabot 7	■■■■■■■
Alabama 9	■■■■■■■■■■	Cowpens 7	■■■■■■■
Wichita 4	■■■■■■■■■■	Langley 7	■■■■■■■
New Orleans 4	■■■■■■■■■■	Birmingham 3	■■■■■■■
Pensacola 3	■■■■■■■■■■	Miami 3	■■■■■■■
Chester 4	■■■■■■■■■■	Vincennes 3	■■■■■■■
Salt Lake City 4	■■■■■■■■■■	Biloxi 3	■■■■■■■
Independence 7	■■■■■■■■■■	Santa Fe 3	■■■■■■■
Belleau Wood 7	■■■■■■■■■■	Mobile 3	■■■■■■■
San Jacinto 7	■■■■■■■■■■	Oakland 3	■■■■■■■
Princeton 7	■■■■■■■■■■	Reno 3	■■■■■■■
Monterey 7	■■■■■■■■■■	San Diego 3	■■■■■■■

5TH FLEET:

Taffy 1 18	■■■■■■	Tennessee 8	■■■■■■■■■■
Taffy 2 18	■■■■■■	Mississippi 8	■■■■■■■■■■
Taffy 3 18	■■■■■■	Pennsylvania 7	■■■■■■■■■■
West Virginia 8	■■■■■■	Louisville 4	■■■■■■■■■■
Maryland 8	■■■■■■	Nashville 4	■■■■■■■■■■
California 8	■■■■■■	Minneapolis 4	■■■■■■■■■■

AIRCRAFT DISPOSITIONS

Enterprise: T8 F9 D8 All Essex-Class CV's: T11 F12 D11 each
All Cabot-Class CVL's: T4 F4 D4 each All CVE's: T2 F2 each

Sub Attacks

1. ○
2. ○○
3. ○○○
4. ○○○○
5. ○○○○○
6. ○○○○○○
7. ○○○○○○○

assigned over a particular square, the SF for Japanese raids is cut in half. Example: The Japanese player raids E5I with 20 bomber factors. U.S. CAP over E5I is 20 factors – net result: Japanese raid results in the elimination of 1 RF. If Japanese fighters accompany the raid, the American CAP must engage the fighters first using the regular FTR vs FTR CRT. Let's assume that the Japanese player had sent 11 fighter factors along with his raid described in the earlier example. The American must now use his CAP to engage the Japanese fighters at odds of at least 1-1, leaving only 9 fighter factors free to intercept the bombers. This has no effect on the attackers, meaning that the Japanese player now destroys 4 SF during his raid. The Japanese player must lose 1 bomber factor per raid every time he attacks Leyte Gulf by air.

U.S. units may move through Leyte Gulf, but only CVE units and the USS *Nashville* may be there at the end of a turn. If the *Nashville* or CVE's are in Leyte Gulf the Japanese must eliminate them before starting reduction.

ESCORT CARRIER GROUPS:

Each CVE group has a RF of 12. They are "reduced" in the same manner as Leyte Gulf. The loss of every two RF means that a carrier is sunk and the Japanese gain 3 points; the American naturally losing the appropriate aircraft complement for that vessel. The Japanese player is assessed one hit against any of his (Jap) ships he wishes and is rewarded with one victory point for each battle turn in which he engages CVE's. This latter ruling simulates destroyer action. Ships which have been sunk by air attack in the same turn in which they are engaged in surface combat are not removed from play until the completion of the third battle turn.

CVE's do not stack with each other or any other U.S. ships; CVE's do not appear on the battle board and do not need battle board counters. Individual escort-carriers (there are 18) do not have any counters of their own in the game.

SUBMARINE ATTACK:

The U.S. may roll for the effect of submarine activity in the area. This is executed immediately after the search phase of the turn, and is done once a turn for a maximum of any seven turns during the game. The effects are:

DIE ROLL	RESULTS
1	Submarine sunk; Japanese get 1 victory point
2,3,4	No effect
5	One group spotted; 1 hit on any vessel therein
6	One group spotted; 3 hits on any vessel therein

A "group" is any stack in a single square. The Japanese need reveal only one group; no matter how many they may have. The group "spotted" can be one already under U.S. surveillance. When spotted by a submarine the Japanese player is not allowed to "underestimate" or "exaggerate" his strength; i.e. he must report the group's actual composition. However, he does not have to report the actual square which the group is in – only the area.

U.S. FLEETS:

Units of the U.S. 3rd and 5th Fleets may not stack together with units of the other fleet. The USS *Nashville* carries the U.S. commander-in-chief, Gen. MacArthur. If it is sunk the Japanese automatically win.

VICTORY CONDITIONS:

If the Japanese have not achieved an automatic victory by the end of the 1700 Oct. 26 turn, victory will be decided by adding up the points from: a) ship sinkings as in *Midway*; b) damage to ships (the Japanese get 1 point for each hit on surviving U.S. ships; and c) the total of points won by the Japanese for reducing Leyte Gulf and the CVE's. The side with the highest total wins.

AIR ATTACKS ON CVE's:

Normal air attacks against the CVE's are conducted in the same manner as air attacks versus Leyte Gulf with the following exceptions:

1. The RF for a full strength CVE group is 12. It thus takes an attacking wave of 12 factors to equal two SF.
2. The RF for a CVE group is adjusted downward in accordance with its strength. Thus, a CVE group which had lost one carrier and had another damaged would defend with an RF factor of 9. It would now take 9 attacking bomber factors to equal 2 SF.
3. The Japanese player loses 1 bomber factor for each carrier in the CVE group it attacks.
4. CAP functions in the same manner as described under Leyte Gulf Reduction with the exception (as noted in 2 above) of the variable RF factor.
5. When Kamikazes attack CVE's, the fighter escort (if any) must be met at 1-1 or better odds. Remaining CAP fighters may strip off against Kamikazes. For every two available fighters one Kamikaze is destroyed prior to attacking. Exactly 1/2 of the remaining Kamikazes (fractions rounded upwards) may be assumed to have found their targets. Each Kamikaze which finds its target is equivalent to two SF.
6. Example: Japanese attack Taffy 3 with 5 Kamikazes escorted by 8 fighters. The American CAP consists of 12 factors; 8 of which immediately engage the Japanese fighters at 1-1. The remaining 4 fighters destroy two Kamikazes. Of the 3 Kamikazes which get through the fighter screen, only two find their targets. Result: 2 U.S. CVE's sink and the RF for Taffy 3 is reduced to 8. On the following turn the Japanese again attack Taffy 3 with 16 bombers and 6 fighters. The U.S. player has a CAP of 15 factors, of which he commits 7 against the Japanese fighters – forcing them to attack at 1-2. The remaining 8 are applied against the RF of Taffy 3, cutting the Japanese SF's for the raid in half. Net result: 2 SF applied against Taffy 3 and 4 Japanese bombers downed in addition to fighter losses.

SHIP CLASSIFICATION

A battle board counter has been provided for each class of vessel used in "Leyte Gulf" other than those already provided in the *MIDWAY* game. These can be found on the Readers Response page of this issue. We suggest that you Xerox this page several times, and substitute the names of each classification's sister ships on the appropriate counters. All necessary search board and aircraft counters needed for the variant can also be found on the Readers Response page.

UNITED STATES ORDER OF BATTLE

CV	– Essex, Wasp, Hornet, Lexington, Hancock, Intrepid, Franklin
CVL	– Cabot, Independence, Belleau Wood, San Jacinto, Princeton, Monterey, Cowpens, Langley
BB	– Iowa, New Jersey
BB	– Alabama, Massachusetts, South Dakota, Washington, Maryland, West Virginia
BB	– California, Tennessee, Mississippi
BB	– Pennsylvania
CA	– Chester, Wichita, Salt Lake City, Louisville, Nashville
CA	– HMAS Shropshire
CL	– Miami, Birmingham, Vincennes, Biloxi, Santa Fe, Mobile, Denver, Boise, Phoenix, Columbia
CLAA	– Oakland, Reno, San Diego

JAPANESE ORDER OF BATTLE

CV	– Zuikaku
CVL	– Chiyo, Chiyoda
XCV	– Hyuga, Ise
BB	– Musashi
BB	– Fuso, Yamashiro
CA	– Takao, Maya, Nachi, Ashigara
CL	– Tama, Oyodo, Isuzu, Abukuma

The best material for battle board counters is light cardboard, the sort you'd find on notebook pads or clothing packages.

MISCELLANEOUS:

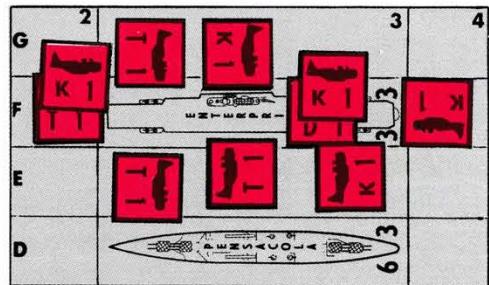
CVE groups only require 3 search-board counters, marked "Taffy 1" or whatever. No battle-board counters are needed (and since there are 18

carriers in the 3 groups, it's a good idea not to make any). Since they do carry planes, and can be sunk, it might be worthwhile to keep track of the CVE ships – if only on paper. They are:

Taffy 1 (TF 77.4.1) – Sangamon, Suwannee, Santee, Chenango, Saginaw Bay, Petrof Bay.

Taffy 2 (TF 77.4.2) – Catona Bay, Manila Bay, Marcus Island, Savo Island, Kadashan Bay, Omnaney Bay.

Taffy 3 (TF 77.4.3) – Fanshaw Bay, St. Lo, White Plains, Kalinin Bay, Kitkun Bay, Gambier Bay.



A rather unenviable situation. The Enterprise and Pensacola may fire at only two of the 10 attacking groups. Note that the K units attack separately from any other groups in the same square; note also that the 3 groups of aircraft in square E-3 must be fired at individually.

The Pensacola and the Enterprise, as an example, will shoot at the Kamikaze astern of the Enterprise. Two ships vs. 1 Kamikaze = 1-2. All other Kamikaze and normal groups attack at 1-1 since both ships have fired. If the Enterprise sinks before all the Kamikazes are expended, they may seek other targets but are not allowed to return to base. All American planes and regular Japanese attacks must carry out their original attacks, regardless of the target condition.

One special note: when computing odds in U.S. aircraft vs. Japanese ship battles, remember to add 2 factors to each BB, and 1 factor to each of the other ships, from the *Midway* game (the *Yamato* now has an AA factor of 12). The Japanese fleet, from bitter experience, added many 25 mm MGs to each ship's AA battery just prior to sailing.

MAKING THE BEAST . . .

The board, rules, aircraft units, and combat results tables of the *MIDWAY* game are to be used, as are many of the ships. The Hit Record Sheets are provided in the body of this article and can be photocopied by those not wishing to mar their magazine. In similar fashion you've been provided with a revised mapboard which can be photocopied or removed from your magazine as is and placed directly over the western half of the current *MIDWAY* mapboard. Ignore Midway and Kure Islands which will still be visible at the eastern end of the map. Use the following as reference points when placing the new map over the original.

Manila Bay: C2H Leyte Gulf: E5I, E6C Clark AFB: C2E

For a variety of reasons movement is not allowed on the following squares:

AREA	SQUARES	AREA	SQUARES
A5	FHI	C1	ALL
A6	ABD	C2	ABCDEFGHI
B4	H	C3	BCFGH
B5	ABD	C4	BD
E6	BI	E7	BCDEF
D1	AD	D6	BCEFH
D3	DEHI	D7	EF
D4	CE	E4	AHI
D5	ABDEGI	E5	BCFHE

The U.S. player should mark a "3" or "5" on his search board counters to show which fleet they belong to. The use of "fleet" counters to avoid waving large stacks of unit counters around the board is also advisable.

The game isn't as uneven as it might seem; if the Japanese can get through they can win despite the large amounts of U.S. aircraft. And it's not that hard to trick the U.S. either, despite the benefit of hindsight; any number of deceptions could work.



Campaign at

WATERLOO

PART VI

by Harley Anton

After having given us his broad strategic opinions and a detailed unit by unit analysis of the respective forces, Harley completes his treatise and the CAMPAIGN AT WATERLOO series with this detailed look at the board; first through the eyes of the French player, and again from the PAA viewpoint.

THROUGH FRENCH EYES:

When the French player observes the map he should allow its natural configurations to shape his campaign into 4 basic steps. Deployment, breaking the Quatre Bras-Nivelles Line, breaking the Genappe River line, and the drive on Waterloo should be attempted in that order.

Since the French strength remains constant whereas the PAA constantly becomes stronger it is to the French player's advantage to deploy and close for battle as quickly as possible. I make very few dogmatic statements but with regard to deployment there is one basic maxim which cannot be overlooked. No French player can win against a competent PAA player if he lacks a Nivelles drive. This can be seen for 2 reasons. First and foremost, a drive down the Nivelles-Mont. St. Jean road is farthest away from the Fourth Corps of the Prussian army. Secondly, since the French begin the game with a 2-1 factor superiority a Nivelles drive cannot harm the French and will always force the PAA to divide their meager force to meet it. The board can generally be divided into 5 major assault areas on the Quatre Bras-Nivelles line (which runs just South of the fold in the board). These areas are the Tilly corridor, the Quatre Bras Gap, the Quatre Bras Heights, the Nivelles Corridors, and the Braine LeComte River. The more corridors the French player assaults, the better chance he has to win the game.

The Tilly Corridor has 3 basic approaches. The Z12 gap, the St. Gery Woods, and the corridor proper. Both the gap and the woods should be discarded immediately as even an unopposed drive would take too long in these areas. Count it up. Unopposed infantry would take 13 turns to get to A39 from Fleurus by way of the gap and even longer by way of the forest. The corridor itself is a different story. Although this is ideal defensive territory for the PAA, the French player should slug away down row 19 in hopes of gaining 2 objectives.

The first of these is infiltration along the Thil River along row 23 in hopes of flanking the Quatre Bras line. The second is the gain of N24 in order to feint at the La Lasne and, more importantly, to flank the Genappe River line from the rear. The corridor drive should never

exceed 30-40 factors and should always be cognizant of the impending arrival of the IVth Corps in its rear.

The second area is the Quatre Bras Gap: this is the one major area where a break is present in the natural barriers of the PAA front. Y-BB, 20-24 should be the major area wherein the French player tries to force a battle of attrition

early in the game. Close to 100 factors should be in this area achieving 3-1 or better attacks at all times. Infiltration of the woods should have as its goal BB23 or AA23 in an attempt to flank AA25. Y25 should be the limited objective of this force with its major objective to crush any PAA forces between it and X27, forcing the abandonment of the Quatre Bras Heights.

Along the CC row the French should keep 45 factors if possible. This can often be done by minimal defensive units at CC24 and CC26 and a 2-6 at CC27 or BB28. A swing force situated at DD22 and CC21 of 30 factors can be a part of this force and the Quatre Bras Gap force as well. Naturally, this force should take a 3-1 on AA25, 26 or 27 whenever such rare good fortune presents itself. Make the woods between AA29 and AA33 a no-man's land. If a 3-1 is unavailable on the heights, play a waiting game. Once the fall of the heights is eminent the forces at CC21-DD22 can join the Gap forces and the CC24-26 forces can reinforce Nivelles or march into Quatre Bras at the French player's option.

The fourth segment of the map is the Nivelles corridors on rows 35 and 38. The French player should have 55-60 factors at Nivelles consisting of cavalry and the II Corps. Although a quite common move among novices, the 1st Corps should *never* be sent to Nivelles as it takes too long to get there. Infantry situated at RR15 and SS15 can reach Nivelles faster than the First Corps, although cavalry starting here and going to Nivelles is preferable. The II Corps is a natural for Nivelles and JJ25 and KK25 should be reached on turn 1. Note that HH30 is a closer route for infantry than II31 and at least 1 stack should go that way. II Corps cavalry can also move from EE27 to CC33 and threaten Nivelles in only 2 turns. The major objectives of the Nivelles force should be W36 and X, Y42. Caution: This is an area wherein PAA counter-attacks are common so be cautious of infiltration maneuvers through Z36, 37.

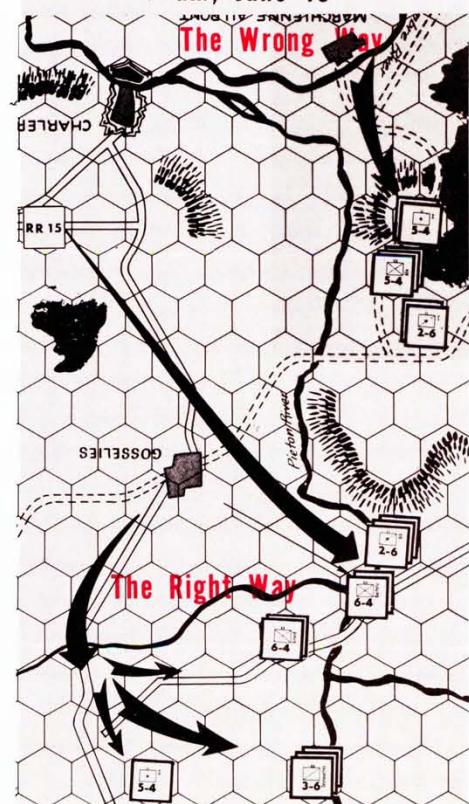
The Fifth Group is an outgrowth of the Nivelles factor. Once they attain Y42 and X42 they can threaten the Braine Le Comte River and still remain a threat to the W36 area by straddling the river.



Once the PAA player has retreated from Quatre Bras in good order he can make himself almost impregnable against frontal assault in the Genappe River line. This line is 1 continuous doubled position of rivers and hills from N18 to W47. There is a 1 square break at T34, but the PAA can and will often counterattack heavily to hold that break or any other attempt at crossing the river line. The major difficulty the PAA player faces is that he must keep most of his army within 4 squares of the primary road forces so that when the river is breached a fallback can be achieved in an orderly fashion with minimal losses. Thus the Genappe River line is easiest to break if flanked. The most devastating break of this line is a breakthrough into the plains between Nivelles and 047. If the French army can break into this area on the first day or early on the second day the game is 95% won. This forces a premature fallback on Mont. St. Jean — the only alternate to which is a battle of attrition stacked in the French favor.

WHICH WAY TO NIVELLES?

7 am, June 16



To win the PAA need to hold the Genappe line most of the second day with minimal losses. A second flanking maneuver of the Genappe is possible by force on the French right, taking the Genappe from the rear. A pincher aimed at Q26 from both North and South is the objective here. Once again, caution must be advised as the extended force in the plains SW of the Dyle River must always be conscience of the impending arrival of the IV Corps to their rear if they wish to survive.

Once the Genappe is breached the campaign must enter its final stages. If the French player has gained a 40 or more factor advantage in the casualty box he should try to extend the PAA as much as possible to his left. In the final drive the Grand Army should constantly be wheeling to its own left in an attempt to keep pressuring the PAA and at the same time delay the impact of the arriving IV Corps as long as possible. Once the IV Corps has arrived and is making itself felt the French player should attempt to swing back to his right so as to gain maximum extension of PAA forces. If the French player beats the IV Corps to Mont. St. Jean by several (3-5) turns, he should try for an immediate battle of attrition based on as many 3-1 attacks as is possible. Similarly, if the French player is late to Mont. St. Jean and faces a superior foe, he should also try a battle of attrition with low odds attacks furnishing the key. This is naturally a last ditch effort and should be used only when the game seems inevitably lost anyway.

The mapboard determines French tactics to a large degree. Until he can breach row S the French player must fight a maneuvering game. Once row S is breached he fights a battle of attrition unless the forces are equal. If they are, he must once again maneuver making full use of all the available approaches to Brussels. Remember, once the PAA player is forced into the Forest De Soignes he must split his forces to cover both victory roads and he must stand in no retreat positions. Thus, the last leg of the mapboard is much in the French player's favor.

THROUGH PAA EYES:

When the PAA player looks at the mapboard he must immediately realize that its proper use is his ultimate key to victory. Obviously, he must always keep the bulk of his army between the French player and the roads to Brussels. Conversely, since he is outnumbered for the first 40% of the game he must expose as few units to the French player as possible. The easiest method for satisfying these two conflicting criterion is by using terrain to its maximum blocking advantage. With this factor in mind, there are certain areas of the mapboard in which the PAA should never stand and fight. The most important of these areas is the plain in the Ligny-Gosselies-Quatre Bras triangle. To meet the French in this area early in the game is suicidal. Neither should the PAA rush blindly toward Trazegnies with his Nivelles forces. There are good defensive positions behind each of these areas; make the Frenchman come to you.

PAA defense should be divided into 3 basic segments. The first of these is the defense of Tilly, Quatre Bras Heights, and Nivelles. The second of these is the Genappe River line. The third segment of the game should be the Battle for Mont. St. Jean. If the French player has not been decimated by the end of the third segment – a fourth, the battle for the Forest De Soignes may become necessary. If this happens the PAA

player will probably lose the game, thus every effort should be made to stem the French tide prior to this action.

The French attack on Tilly in Phase I can be defended in 3 basic ways. The first two methods are preferable as they attempt to entice the French player into an overcommitment in Tilly. Since Tilly is the easiest area for the PAA to defend such an overcommitment can often parallel Marshall Grouchy's historical disaster at Wavre. The third method involves eliminating French desires to enter the Tilly corridor and will be dealt with shortly.

In Method No. 1, all PAA 1-6's and 2-4's are moved into the corridor. From Z18 to R20 the Frenchman may be stopped at the cost of only 1 unit per turn. An aggressive PAA opening (discussed later) can prevent French units from reaching Z18 for 4 turns. The eleven units allotted to the corridor can be sacrificed 1 per turn and the IV Corps will come bursting on when the unit at S19 is hit. The major strength of this defense is that a 12 factor sacrifice can hold the French player for 11 turns and large numbers of French units can be trapped in the corridor by the arriving IV Corps. Weaknesses of this defense include the possibility of raids at Z12 which are difficult to stop, and the fact that the Bors De Metz can be infiltrated by 11AM/17. Most severe of all is the lack of any cavalry on other fronts, making screening and soak-offs hard to come by. Because of these weaknesses, most expert PAA players prefer method No. 2; the hyper-decoy.

The forces committed to Tilly in method No. 2 are six 1-6's, one 2-4, three 4-4's and one 5-4, or two 4-4's and a 6-4 as optional in place of the three 4-4's and one 5-4 variation. This defense allows for 10 turns of delay (counting the 3 turns it takes the Frenchman to reach Tilly) and leaves a counterattack force of 14-17 reserve factors. These factors can hold the Dyle River and prevent penetration of the Bors De Metz at S24 and U24.

The major weakness of this defense is that if the French do not push a corridor drive, then the 14-17 infantry factors are wasted when they might be sorely needed on other fronts. This can occasionally be turned to advantage late in the game by a well timed counterattack toward Quatre Bras.

Method No. 3 involves stacking 15 factors at V21 and U21. These stacks should consist of varied unit strengths. If the French player decides on a large corridor drive, the 1-6's in these stacks should provide delays while the infantry return to the Quatre Bras front by way of the Bors De Metz. If the French drive is light, the Infantry of these 2 stacks can be committed in sufficient strength to halt it or drive it back. If the French player decides on no Tilly drive at all, then all the PAA units go to Quatre Bras by way of the Bors De Metz. The advantages of this defense in strength conserved are obvious. At the same time, it suffers from 2 basic weaknesses. The first is that transfer back and forth between the 2 fronts takes 3 turns at the least. Further, one must have a delicate sense of commitment and timing to avoid wrong commitment due to French feints. More importantly, this defense can be disasterous if the French player smashes the Quatre Bras front while the Tilly forces are caught in the Bors De Metz. The road to Brussels and victory would then be open. Still the defense is very tempting and the expert should give it consideration at least as an enjoyable variation to experiment with.

The Phase 1 defense of Quatre Bras and the heights can be divided into two parts. The first of these is the psychology of aggressive placement and the second is the actual defense itself.

A unit on EE23 (preferably a 1-6) is a must. Steinmetz and a 6-4 should be in a position to move to AA27 and AA25 respectively on turn 2. It is good psychology to make your opponent think you will stand and meet him on the plains of Ligny by your set-up. Thus a good opening set-up resembles this one: two 6-4's at EE14, EE16 and EE17 and one 6-4, one 7-4 at DD20. This should at the very least retard an early French cavalry rush on Tilly. At the same time, if the French player has 30 factors of cavalry at JJ13 and KK13, this defense may lose a 6-4 on turn one. This loss is acceptable as it costs the French a 2-6 soak-off, possible exchange of 6 more cavalry factors, exposure of his cavalry early in the game, and more importantly, severely retards the French Nivelles drive. On turn 2, the Prussians should fall back toward Quatre Bras leaving delay units at FF16 and FF19. Suddenly the French player sees his chance of quick victory melt away into defensive terrain right before his eyes. On turn 3, one delay unit at CC19 should suffice as the defense enters its second stage. Phase II involves the defense of the Y22-BB22 corridor. Here the PAA player stands and fights or backs slowly toward Quatre Bras behind delay screens. If one decides to stand and fight, the French should be made to soak-off as much as possible. In addition, here as in every other engagement, the French should never be allowed to attack a large stack of units from more than 2 squares. On any one turn, a delay unit can be placed and all the remaining corridor units shifted to Y/29 and Y/30 to prevent woods infiltration or to counterattack in the Heights area. The real key to an excellent PAA defense is to get Opstal or a 1-6 to Z27 immediately. A 6-4 can be placed there to the PAA advantage, but only as an addition, *never* as a replacement to Opstal. This seemingly worthless maneuver makes the Heights almost 2-1 proof.

If the French player makes an attack on AA25 at 2-1 and wins, he is forced to advance (if he does not the PAA can simply counterattack and resume their doubled position). When he does advance, Opstal (and optionally the 6-4 allotted to Z27) move to AA26. Other stacks from the Quatre Bras corridor move to AA24, Z25 and Z26 and an instant surrounded counterattack occurs with Opstal furnishing the soak-off.

There are several variations or counterattacks which can be very effective, depending on how much of a risk the PAA player wishes to run. The most effective of these occurs when the French Nivelles force does not exceed 50 factors and is composed mostly of cavalry. In 2 turns the bulk of the PAA army is shifted from the Quatre Bras Gap toward Nivelles while only 1 or 2 factors are left to jam the gap against French advances. The trick to this attack is speed, for a late return to Quatre Bras will be disastrous.

Other defenses of the Heights which have some merit to aggressive players include allowing the French to achieve BB26 on turn 1 and counterattacking viciously and stacking 4-4's at AA25 and AA26 on top of 6-4's to precipitate French attacks. I do not recommend the first of these methods as it virtually surrenders both Tilly and Nivelles to French drives and at the same time exposes the PAA army to a decisive battle of attrition early in the game. Its only advantage is that it forces the French player to attack in a

confined area where his soak-off losses are liable to be heavy. The second of these variations keeps all the advantages of the first and adds one more. The French are always attacking doubled units whereas the PAA are not. The disadvantage to method 2 is that the French may break the PAA army too early in the game for the PAA casualty gain to be of decisive advantage.

Once the Heights are breached or outflanked the X and W rows may be held with one delay factor per turn as a time gaining prelude to a fall back to the Genappe River. Once again, the key is to deny the French player a 3 square attack and 2 squares as often as possible. A delay unit at V27 and stacks at V31 and S31 can be the final defense before falling back. Even if the fallback to Genappe is more precipitous, blocking the road at X26 or X27 is essential to allow at least 1 turn for deployment along the R row.

To summarize: 1) A soak-off unit positioned at Z27 is essential.*2) Good use should be made of the excellent interior lines between Quatre Bras and Nivelles. 3) Try to achieve local superiority counterattacks only when even if the attack achieves an exchange, one will still be in a relatively sound position at the start of the French move. 4) When outnumbered in factors try to deny your opponent squares to attack from. 5) Kill as much French cavalry as possible in early attacks. Leave the infantry for later when everyone has arrived on the board.

Phase I defense of Nivelles can be either the easiest or hardest PAA task depending on French commitments. I have found that Perponcher is a valuable asset when committed here. On the second turn he should be at V41. This guarantees the road to Braine Le Comte, which otherwise could be cut at V44 by French cavalry thrusts before the 11 AM reinforcements could arrive to guard it. If your opponent sends a large cavalry force to threaten Braine Le Comte, Cooke should stay at V47 and Alten at V44. If the Braine Le Comte River is broken early, the French could force the PAA to fight them in another area, which the PAA must avoid; the plains running from Nivelles to O47.



Once the Braine Le Comte line is secured, Perponcher or Chasse should hold Z39 until flanked. Delay down the DD and CC rows is possible at a loss of one factor/turn. The PAA has 2 basic problems at Nivelles: when to counterattack and how to stop infiltration at CC-AA33. Perponcher and any 7-4's or 6-4's are excellent for stopping infiltration and for delaying down the Z35 corridor as 1 stack of 15

factors cannot 3-1 them. Cavalry should be top priority for counter-attack at Nivelles. In addition, units which can be surrounded by the complicated terrain features also present a choice target for counterattacks. W36 is a great position and it is admirable to launch at least one counterattack to prevent it being outflanked. The retreat to the river behind Nivelles should be synchronized with the Quatre Bras fall-back to the Genappe if at all possible.

The Phase II PAA defense of Genappe must last at least until the IV Corps enters the board if the PAA player is to win the game. The Genappe River line is most easily broken at R27, T34 and T39. If broken at R27, the PAA can delay along the R row and actually shorten his defensive perimeter. If broken at T34 (delay units can usually hold for 1 or 2 turns here) or T39 immediate counterattacks should be staged. Remember, that any French units that breach a river defense have their backs against it on the succeeding turn, and *cannot retreat* when counterattacked. Mobile forces should hold the La Lasne flank and immediate fallback should be made if the Braine Le Comte River falls. During the retreat to Mont. St. Jean the primary roads should each be blocked with a delay unit. If the French aggressively pursue with part of their army (notably cavalry with light infantry support) the PAA should turn on this part and crush it before the remaining French heavy units come up. This would be the last PAA chance in the game for an advantageous counterattack.

An often successful but risky PAA strategy can be used if the Genappe River line is still intact when the IV Corps arrives. If this is the case then the IV Corps can be brought on behind the French at DD10.

Combining with any remaining units in the Tilly area (remember the 14-17 "useless" factors) it can be a formidable rear arm of a PAA pincher designed to crush the French army. This strategy can backfire if the French breakthrough toward Brussels because he can then delay behind him and defect to victory. If played correctly, the more probable result is the encirclement of the French army and a PAA victory.

Once the PAA player has fallen back to the La Lasne-Braine Le Leude line he must make his stand. The Forest De Soignes must be avoided at all costs. The basic maxims of defense and delay still apply in this region. Try to prevent the French extension of your lines by counterattacking. Avoid allowing the French player any 3 square attacks. Don't expose stacks of small units. Be sure that you attack French cavalry whenever possible. Finally don't allow the French to interpose their army between your army and either of the victory condition roads. (The area between the roads is so thickly forested that it becomes of little practical value for victory condition purposes.)

SUMMARY:

Foremost for the French player to remember is that his cavalry are the eyes of his army. He should never fritter it away or tie it down to assaults on Infantry. Secondly, Napoleon's greatest successes involved smashing flank assaults. The 2-1 luck route to quick victory is a frontal assault maneuver. One mistake many French players are guilty of is not realizing that Waterloo is 5 days long not just 2½. The delay units offered by the PAA in the first 2 days often allow the French to inflict 40-50 factors

damage at a loss of only 8-10. Once this situation comes about the French player stands an excellent chance of winning because the two armies are now of approximately equal strength.

Further, the natural defensive advantage of the PAA is cancelled to some extent because they are forced to stand and fight in clear terrain and often with forest at their backs by the victory conditions. When this situation occurs the French should continue their attacks down the Waterloo road in an arc from about N36 to H45 sweeping forward with a defensive line of minimal force along the center of this arc ready to spring in either direction. The PAA cannot afford to attack the weak French center because to do so exposes him to envelopment and exposes the victory roads. Once Mont. St. Jean is captured the PAA army must be split to defend both roads. At this point the French can use Napoleon's tactic of concentrating on 1 flank while containing the other and sweep to victory. Finally, if all else fails the chancy frontal assaults can be tried just as easily at this point as at the beginning of the game. The French (and to a lesser extent the PAA) should remember the Napoleonic advantage of always keeping a reserve force ready to sway a battle. Particularly in the latter stages of the game, the rules barring withdrawal and reentry into a zone of control of the same unit on one turn make strategic reserves a necessity. Naturally, tactics of flanking (achieving 3 or more squares from which to attack) and development should not be ignored.

The PAA player must remember that the cavalry screen was the primary innovation of the Napoleonic era with respect to cavalry tactics. This is easily translated in the delay tactics in Avalon Hill's Waterloo which is the basic part of PAA strategy.



SERIES REPLAY

Continued from Page 17

In the center, a large battle develops for the plain west of Rethel. The French soon occupy positions on the ridges west of Laon and Lafere. Heavy losses are sustained by the French forces defending the gap (W17). The French also continue to occupy the Argonne and none of the infantry corps are attacked (except for the 6-6-2 units). Instead, the main German attacks are directed against the gap in CC31 and against the cavalry divisions in BB31 and BB32. The French 6-6-2 corps are attacked at 2-1 odds and are forced to retreat with casualties. Soon BB30, BB31, BB32, and AA32 are in German hands and the ridge north of Langres has been turned.

The French player conceded when the situation reached that shown on Map No. 6. The Game was declared to be a Decisive German Victory.

This game certainly illustrates the fact that it should not be necessary for the German player to make a costly series of frontal assaults against strong French positions. It is much better to attack the key positions of the French line, those positions whose loss would compromise the whole line. If the French can be bled at these positions, their eventual defeat is assured for the French cannot win a battle of attrition and this is even more true when the attrition rate is not in their favor.



WINNING WITH THE FRENCH

by Tom Oleson

Tom Oleson is known far and wide for his skill and devotion to one wargame. When not playing the stock exchange, Tom can usually be found in his study dreaming up new ways to play ANZIO. Fortunately for us, Mr. Oleson took time off from the aforementioned pursuits to give us his answer to the French quandary in FRANCE 1940. Like many others lately, Tom advocates the "it's better to live to fight another day" philosophy which is rapidly becoming the accepted norm of play for the game.

France, 1940 represents a significant departure from Avalon Hill's previous WWII land games. By that I do not refer primarily to the novel CRT, nor to the use of air power, nor even to the mechanized movement phase, but to the heavy reliance on "What If" scenarios.

Imagine this same procedure had it been applied to the earlier games:

1. Anzio – what if the Afrika Korps had withdrawn in good order from Tunisia?

2. D-Day – what if the Salerno invasion had been crushed, thus freeing more troops for the French front?

3. Stalingrad – what if the German infantry had been mechanized?

4. Afrika Korps – what if Malta had fallen?

Obviously, this list is merely a crude hint of what can be done with this approach. It's like MIRVing a nuclear missile – warheads can go off in all directions. It also presupposes the variants which are always so popular. It's interesting, but as developed in France, 1940, it's quite a departure from the old idea of "Now you command the forces, and see if you can do better than Rommel," etc.; it gives a presumably historical wargame a strong flavor of the abstract, like Tactics II or Blitzkrieg. Although I don't want to belabor the point, one could even argue that France, 1940 properly belongs in this latter category of wargame, since the main emphasis is on the non-historical situations.

Of course, it's diverting to probe the possibilities if different strategies had been followed, and/or different events transpired. Be that as it may, I for one hate to see this take precedence over attempting to simulate the historical version. This is surely the case in France, 1940, since it is stated that "quite frankly, between two equal players of good ability the Allies don't stand a chance in the historical situation."

If so, why bother with it? In effect, doesn't this make the game purely a study of certain events that could possibly have happened thirty-odd years ago in Europe? Doubtless a suitable topic for a wargame, but perhaps a bit disappointing to those who would prefer a more thorough exploration of what was, rather than what might have been.

Of course, there is a formula for determining victory even if you are playing the scenario where the Germans start in Paris because Charlemagne's son Pippin died at the age of two, but being rather old fashioned, I am one of those backward people who prefers to win or lose because I captured Stalingrad or crossed the Meuse, rather than having to check it out with a slide-rule!

Get to the point: the point is that I do not agree that the historical situation should be categorically dismissed as the game's designer has chosen to do. To win as the Allies using the historical OOB is obviously difficult, but at the same time an interesting challenge, and not impossible, in my opinion. Here is how I propose that it be attempted:

First, I do concede that the historical set-up, the "Dyle Plan," is hopeless for the Allies. Therefore they must be permitted a free set-up, as in so many other games. That being the case, how do things stand?

Turn	Comparison of Forces						Axis/Allies ratio
	ALLIES mechanized	infantry	total	AXIS mech.	inf.	total	
start	40	153	193	63	143	206	1.1/1
1				28	234	1.2/1	
2				3	28	265	1.4/1
3				2	14	281	1.5/1
4	7	13	213		14	295	1.4/1
5		6	219		7	302	1.4/1
6		6	225		7	309	1.4/1
7		6	231				1.3/1
8		6	237				1.3/1
9		6	243				1.2/1
factors	47	196	243	68	341	309	1.2/1

As the table shows, the German ground forces enjoy a superiority of only about six or seven to five. German artillery is not included, it being considered balanced by the Maginot Line. The 3 air landing regiments are included.

Obviously, this table ignores the 4/1 Axis air superiority, since there is no direct strength comparison possible with ground forces. Nonetheless, the point is that the disparity between the two forces is not enormous, provided the Allies follow a careful strategy.

Point one in this strategy is the realization that territory is relatively unimportant in France, '40. It is only useful insofar as it protects withdrawing Allied units. No matter if at the end of turn 10 German artillery shells the Eiffel Tower. So long as Paris is not actually occupied, the Allies are as well off having lost everything north of the Seine and the Marne as if they still held Liege.

Parenthetically, I find this one of the unrealistic features of the game. The Allied player might well prevent all German units from entering France and yet lose decisively. Of course, it could always be argued that destruction of the enemy is the point of the whole exercise, and winning territory must inevitably follow. The victory conditions of Stalingrad, Bulge, AK, etc., could conceivably all be done over as a ratio of units destroyed, and this is an increasingly popular procedure in wargames. In my opinion, it can permit perverse results in certain circumstances. Of course, this could be corrected, and no doubt someone will come up with a point system for cities captured, etc.

Until then, the Allied player must fix firmly in mind that he can only win by retreating – in the place, and at the right pace.

It is about 26 hexes from the closest points on the German frontier to Paris. This means that it would take German *infantry* 5 turns to reach Paris unopposed. Presuming that the Allies can force the Germans to pivot about the Ardennes, which is the crux of this suggested strategy, then the distance increases to more than 30 hexes, or 6 turns.

Therefore, this is the problem:

1. Delay the German infantry for 4 extra turns.

2. Prevent the German armor from acting as a spearhead.

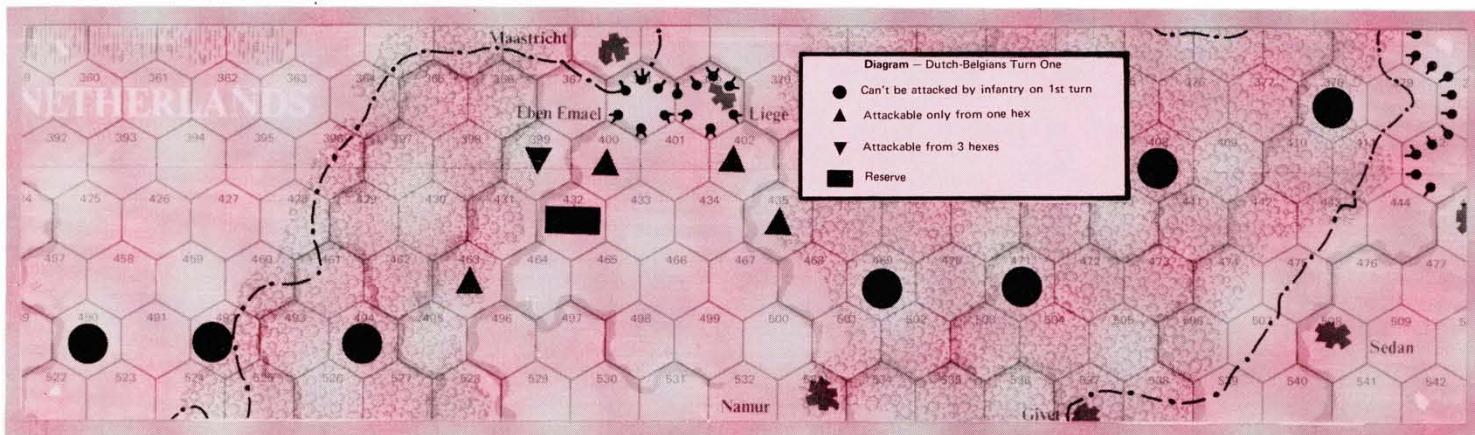
3. Keep Allied casualties under a 3/1 ratio vs. Germans.

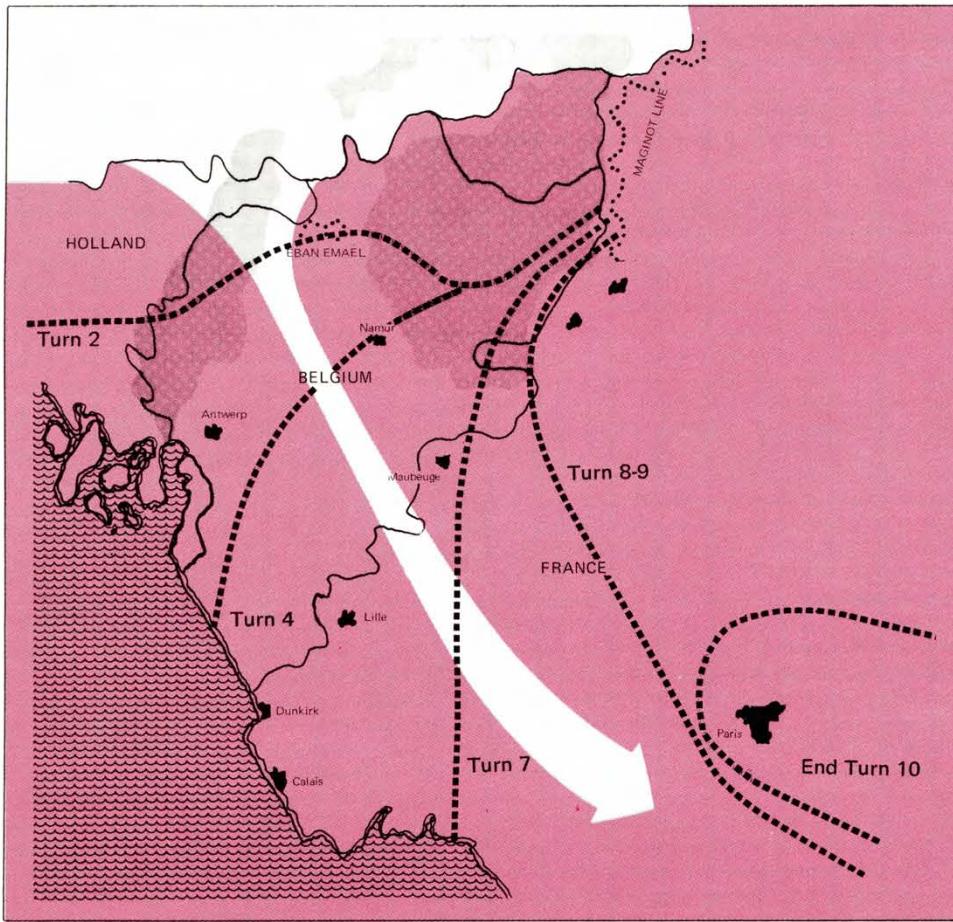
I suggest this be attempted as follows:

A. Initial Set-Up

1. Dutch/Belgian

As the diagram shows, of the 13 units available, 7 are more than four hexes from the German border, and therefore immune to attack by infantry. Five of these units, because they are deep in the woods, can not be reached by armor, either.





Four units can only be attacked from one hex, and therefore at relatively low odds. Moreover, these units are either behind a river or in woods.

Only one unit can be attacked in strength, and should it be destroyed, the zocs of surviving units will probably prevent significant penetration.

2. Allies

Fortress units should be in the more exposed Maginot hexes. There should also be a few French infantry corps in the Maginot Line, as well as 2 or 3 smaller mechanized units in close reserve to plug up any holes. A significant penetration in this area is probably the greatest danger the Allies face, as there are no good defensive positions from which to prevent the Germans from exiting to the south.

The remaining Allied units should deploy in the area Maubeuge/Givet/Montmedy, being careful not to be trapped in the Givet salient by German paratroops, should the Germans initially attack Holland, Luxemburg, and France, but *not* Belgium.

I strongly suggest concentration of the British units, and Allied armor, as this is probably the only way the Allies can counter-attack German armored salients.

Be sure to keep air units out of German range. If it appears they will be exposed to heavy attack, it is better to evacuate them by sea (5 points lost), than risk destruction (10 points).

B. Second Turn

Since French infantry will need two turns to reach the positions the Dutch and Belgians hold at the start, except for the central/southern Ardennes, these units should fall back rather than expose themselves to destruction. Not knowing the path of strongest German advance, it's impossible to say exactly where the Dutch and Belgians should risk holding forward positions on turn two. Here, as throughout the game, the Allied commander will have to carefully weigh the risk of casualties vs. the delay gained by territory held

a turn or two longer. The Allies will *have* to take losses, or withdraw too rapidly. Their ability to judge where and when to withdraw, together with their success in forcing the Germans to pivot about the Ardennes, will decide whether they win or lose.

C. German Alternate Strategy

What if the Germans, on the first turn, push into Holland and Luxemburg, perhaps even attacking France, but ignoring Belgium? Although they lose a turn in coming to grips with the main body of the enemy, they do better their strategic posture. Their position in Luxemburg forces the Belgians to withdraw to the western Ardennes, or be exposed to heavy attack, unsupported by the Allies. From Holland, they can outflank the Liege bottleneck, and make untenable the defensive disposition outlined in diagram I.

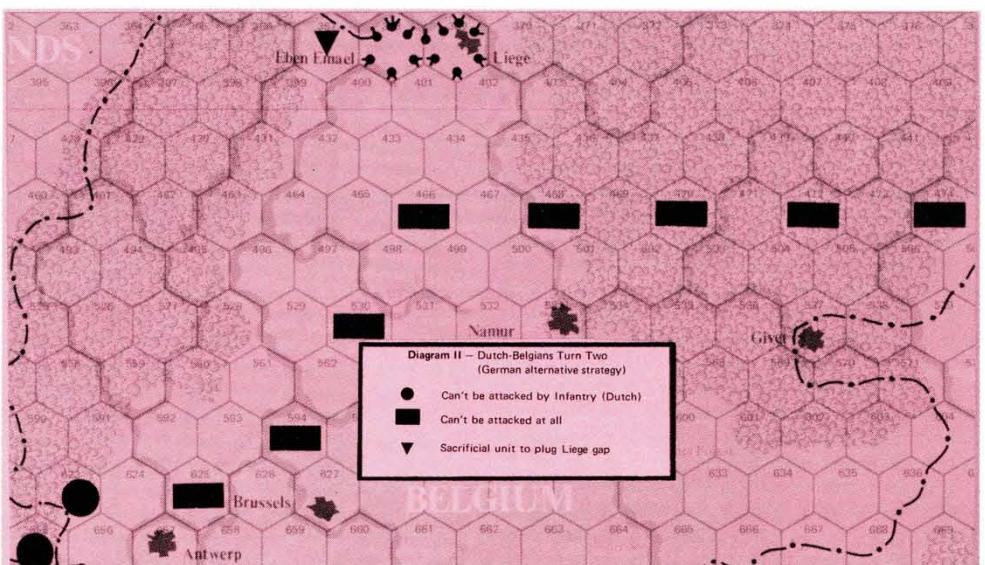
So a different plan is needed for the Dutch and Belgian forces to fall back to should the Germans attack this way (see diagramm II). Of course, in this case it is probable that the Germans will concentrate their forces more to the north than if they push into Belgium on the first turn, and some Allied adjustments may be called for.

D. It is presumed that the following rules will be used:

1. German paratroops (so that the Belgians may benefit from Eben-Emael).
2. No mild winter (since the whole purpose is to stick as close as possible to history).
3. Sea evacuation.

I don't mean to imply that the strategy outlined above guarantees Allied victory, or even a 50/50 chance: far from it! I do think it gives them a *fighting* chance, for those who would like to explore the historical OoB of France, 1940.

One last point: since the emphasis of **France, 1940** is so heavily on "What if?" situations, here's another, using the historical OoB – Britain and France have an alliance with the Benelux countries, and can deploy therein at start. Surely this is no more improbable than some of the other alternatives, and should give the Germans quite a struggle.



AN ORIGINS TRILOGY



Ever since its inception, ORIGINS OF WW II has been praised for its ease of play, simple rules, and limited playing time. However, the same mechanics and limited number of turns which make the game so delightfully easy to play, also tend to stereotype play once familiarization sets in. The variant objective charts included with the game do much to offset this, but the creation of variant methods of play for ORIGINS is inevitable if the insatiable appetite of the hardcore is to be appeased. Thus, we present an overview of variants as designed by three separate enthusiasts.

ORIGINS: AVOIDING A WORLD WAR

The recent dispute between Dunnigan and J.E. Pourelle has served at least one purpose, if not more, in suggesting to me an ORIGINS variant that goes beyond a mere reordering of National Objectives and could prove very exciting indeed. The present game assumes that if Germany wins by 15 points or more, there is war — but Germany still wins, and there is no real motivation on the part of any player to prevent the outbreak of war so long as he can still win.

But in point of historical fact, the German General Staff appears to have been rather convinced that another world war would be catastrophic for Germany. Moreover, there is evidence that Hitler shared their view, however reluctantly; he seems to have wanted an understanding with England and a *limited* war with Russia sometime around 1943. And, in any case, most people seem to agree in retrospect that Germany had little chance of ultimately winning the war when it finally came, however impressive her initial showing.

Thus, I propose an ORIGINS variant in which, if a war breaks out, Germany *loses* — and the country with the next highest point score wins. Thus, the German player is in a real dilemma — he needs enough points to win, but not so decisively as to cause a general war and lose everything! Obviously, this approach is going to require a little play testing to achieve point balance — perhaps the point definition of war will have to be raised to, say, eighteen — but it could be done, and the result may well be a far more challenging game.

Also not to be overlooked is the possibility of a *decisive victory* for Germany; this would consist (as Hitler hoped) of understandings with England and France, and a limited war with Russia. War with Russia would consist of exclusive German control of the Baltics, Poland, and Romania. Of course, it would be in the interests of England and France to help Russia prevent this, as they want to win too.

Thus, in short, this simple variation provides a whole new outlook on the game and its strategies that could be very exciting indeed. It might even be worth looking into. Playtest, anyone?

by Lew Pulsipher, Mark Saha, and Lawrence Valencourt

ITALIAN ORIGINS

James Dunnigan notwithstanding, I think most people agree that ORIGINS OF WW II is not an “historical simulation” in any meaningful sense, but some believe that ORIGINS is basically a good game or “game-system.” Unfortunately, two factors act to destroy the quality of play in the versions of ORIGINS included in the game. These are 1) the very large luck factor, and 2) the extreme imbalance. Far too often a clearly superior player can be thwarted by a single die roll. Many players prefer a game whose outcome is determined by skill. Anyone who has played the historical game, which is standard in postal play, knows that the United States has no chance to win, and France wins very seldom (I have not yet heard of a French win). The other three countries have a fair chance, but that is only three out of five! The comments on play in the Designers Notes included with the game are difficult to explain in light of playing experience.

The following two variants are designed respectively to eliminate the luck factor and to balance the game by addition of a sixth player, Italy. This addition should, *incidentally*, create a less inaccurate simulation, but that is *not* the primary intent. Play-balance is the objective in the second variant.

Proportional combat variant:

1. All rules for historical ORIGINS apply except as follows.

2. The Diplomatic Conflict Table is not used. Combat is resolved using the formula: winner's loss equals loser's strength squared, divided by winner's strength; the winner is always the stronger force, and all losers are eliminated (see exception below). For example, in a 5-3, winner's loss is $3^2/5 = 9/5$ or 2 (round fractions to nearest whole number, with $\frac{1}{2}$ rounded up).

3. *On the first two turns*, only one half of a force can be eliminated in a conflict. Both winner's and loser's losses are halved. If there are an odd number of PF's in the loser's force, one more will be eliminated than will survive. If there is only one defending PF, it cannot be destroyed. For example, on turn 2, five PF's attack three. Two defenders are lost, and $9/5$ times $\frac{1}{2}$ or 1 attacker is eliminated.

4. Add 2 PF's per turn to United States allocations, and 1 PF per turn to French allocations.

Six player variant:

1. All rules of historical ORIGINS apply except as follows.

2. Add an Italian player, playing just before France on even numbered turns and just after France on odd numbered turns. Italian allocations are: 8, 10, 12, 12, 12, 12. Italian objectives are: NC Austria-4 — U Britain-5 — NC Czechoslovakia-2 — U France-4 — U Germany-3 — U Rhineland-2 — NC Romania-1 — No German U in France-2 — No Russian U in Germany-2.

3. Add 1 PF per turn to allocations for the United States and France.

Of course, these variants may be combined as well as played separately.

SOLITARY ORIGINS?

Impossible you say; on the contrary it's very easy.

First you decide on which of the five variations you want to play. Then take a deck of cards and let each denomination represent a country.* Then you decide upon some method of determining which fraction of each country's allocated PF's you put where.** My method follows.

In case of fractions of PF being put into a country always make it the next largest whole number. (For example $3/4$'s of 2 PF's would require all (or both) to be placed in the same spot, $3/4$ of 14 — 11 PF's, etc). The only difference in the way you play the game, aside from the fact that you play each country in turn, is in this first part; the placement of the PF's. After the first round placement proceed as normal giving understanding and/or control and the eliminating of opponents PF, etc. On the second round, if you flip a card designating placement of your PF's in a country already controlled by another power simply flip another card over.

Perhaps the idea is best illustrated by the sample turn below:

*Example

Ace	= Alsace-Lorraine	Queen	= Russia
Two	= Austria	King	= United States

**

Clubs	$\frac{1}{4}$ of remaining PFs
Diamonds	$\frac{1}{2}$ of remaining PFs
Hearts	$\frac{3}{4}$'s of remaining PFs
Spades	all of remaining PFs

Sample Move:

Turn 1

USA turn	2 hearts	Both PF's go to Austria
French	Q hearts	3 PF's to go to Russia
French	J hearts	1 PF to Rumania
Britain	K clubs	2 PF's to US
Britain	K hearts	5 PF's to US
Britain	7 spades	1 PF to Germany
Russia	10 clubs	2 PF's to Rhineland
Russia	5 hearts	3 PF's to Czechoslovakia
Russia	5 clubs	1 PF to Czechoslovakia
Germany	8 spades	All 12 PF's to Italy

Now in the “diplomacy” portion of the move (the “aggressive” portion is skipped — no two opponents have counters in the same country) the British can gain an understanding with the US as can the Germans with Italy.

As the game continues you'll find that in most cases each country will end up with a representative sample of each of the five belligerent PF's. However unrealistic it might be for Germany to have 32 factors in France!! Still, I feel this version of solitary is a good way to practice and to develop a feel for the “tactics” of the game and variation played.

The game I just finished was one of an aggressive French Policy (and it had all of the last turn Germans in France, 6 of spades!) and the final score was surprisingly US-15; F-11; B-2; R-8; G-8.

Remarks: Leave the PF's placed in your home country there as they will be your only means of eliminating undesirable “understandings” gained by your “opponent.”



SERIES REPLAY

1914

A LITTLE REVISION AND A LOT OF REPLAY

Roy Easton has long had a penchant for difficult wargames. It seems to have manifested itself in this, his latest literary effort. Roy not only proposes a bold new strategy for the Germans in 1914, he amends the rules to cover a few existing ambiguities, and then proceeds to substantiate his hypothesis by relating a demonstration game. We think you'll agree with us that Roy has touched all bases in his approach to 1914.

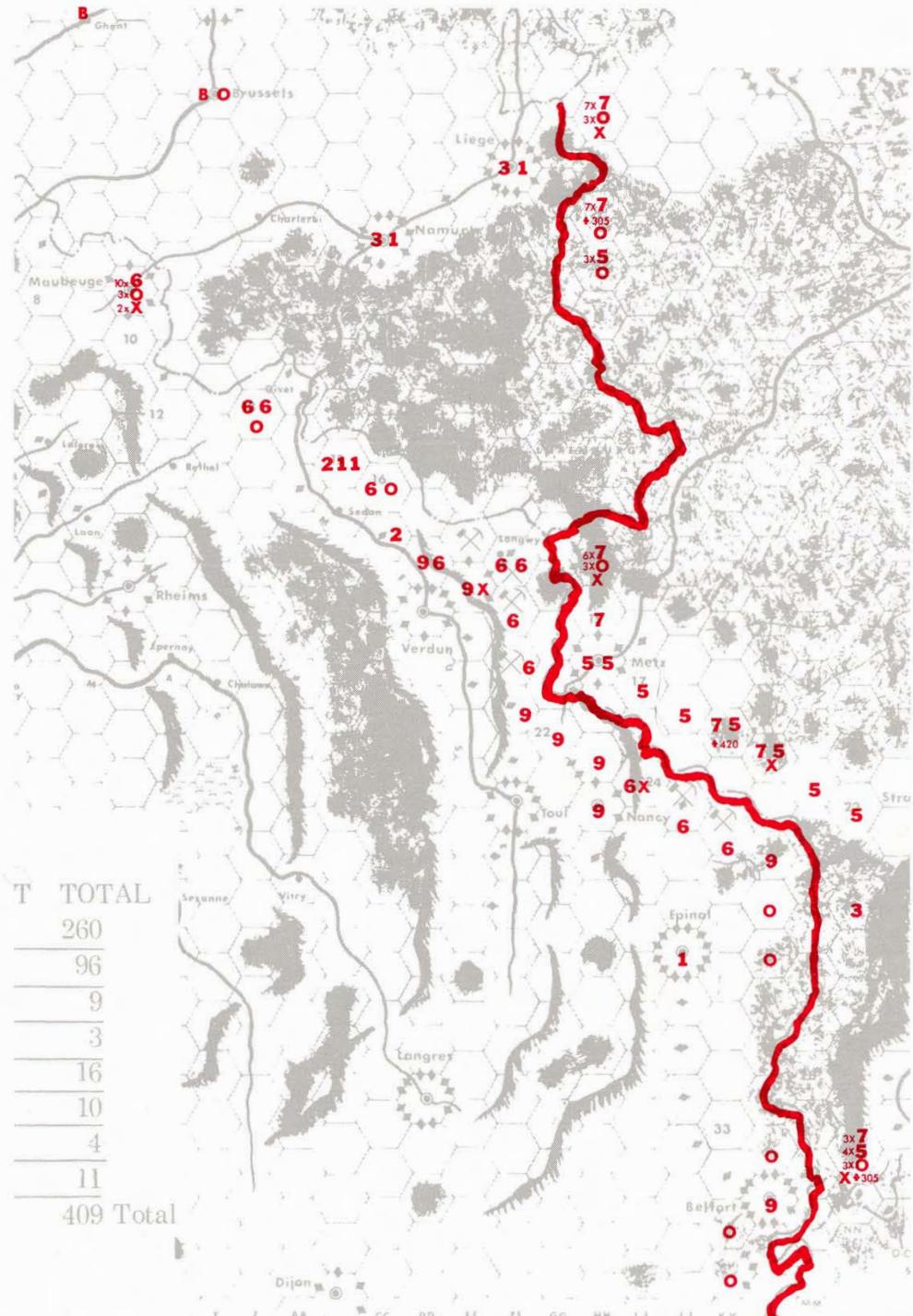
THE GERMAN ALTERNATIVES

1914! The very words conjure up thoughts of the mighty German juggernaut as it stormed across France to its appointment with destiny on the Marne. Having played the Avalon Hill game 1914 more times than I would care to mention, I can attest to the fact that the strategies used to win the game for the Germans closely parallel those actually used, but in the game the element of surprise is lacking for the French player now expects an attack through Belgium although there is surprisingly little that he can do about it. In this article I shall examine some alternative strategies for both sides and suggest some necessary rule changes.

In 1871, the Prussian army won the Franco-Prussian War and Chancellor Bismarck formed the German Empire under the first Kaiser, Wilhelm I. Both Bismarck and von Moltke, the Prussian Chief of Staff, believed in the need to avoid war on two fronts. Their plan, should this occasion arise, was to fight a delaying action on both fronts, attempting to defeat the weaker enemy first. It was not until 1891 with a new Kaiser, Wilhelm II, and a new Chief of Staff, Count Alfred von Schlieffen, that the General Staff began to make plans for assuming the offensive in a future war.

These early plans mainly concerned a combined Austro-German invasion of Russia. Although this drive would be under German direction, these plans never had Schlieffen's complete support. He seems to have taken the lesson of Napoleon's 1812 campaign to heart for he did not believe that even the combined Austro-German armies could destroy the Russian army in a single campaign. If the Russians fought delaying actions, they could tie up the bulk of the German armies on the vast Russian steppes, far from the German supply railheads and unable to come to the aid of the small forces covering the Franco-German border should the French succeed in mounting a successful offensive.

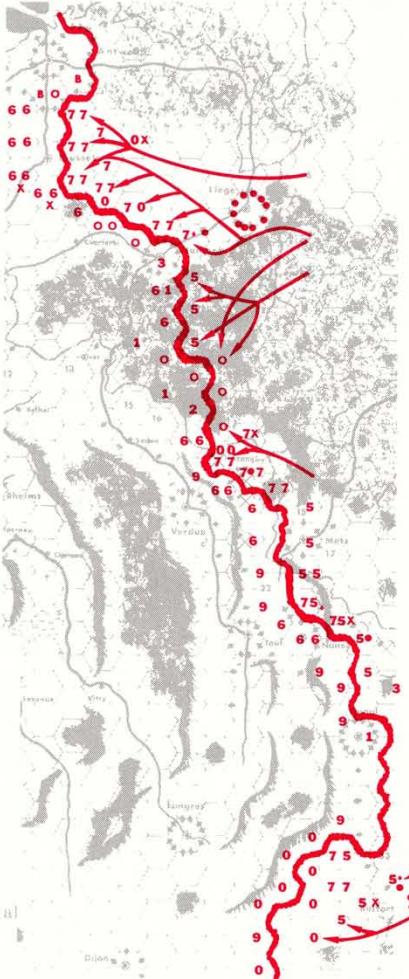
Thinking along these lines convinced Schlieffen that the Western Front would be decisive and soon the German General Staff began formulating plans that called for a German invasion of France while holding off the slowly mobilizing Russian armies with delaying forces in East Prussia. By 1897, Schlieffen was considering outflanking the powerful French defenses on the Franco-German border by violating Belgian neutrality. By 1905,



MAP NO. 1. Belgian 6-8-3's are designated as B. The German has committed one 5-8-3, two 3-4-2's, one 2-4-3, four 4-4-2's, five 2-2-2's, and four 1-1-2's to the East for a total value of 45,364 points, including all the heavy, infantry, is committed in the West.

the now-famous Schlieffen Plan had been developed and, although modified by von Moltke in

the decade preceding the war, it was the German mobilization plan in 1914.



MAP NO. 2. After turn 3 both sides have lost heavily but the French cannot recoup their losses as can the Germans and are pushed steadily back.

Were there any other options available to the German planners? Had the Germans stuck to their earlier plans and made their main effort against Russia, there is little doubt that they would have been successful. Russia was torn by internal problems and was in no position to recover as rapidly as she did in World War II. The question is, of course, how long would it have taken for the German and Austrian armies to completely defeat the Russians. Unfortunately, this question is outside the scope of this article.

If we confine our attention only to plans involving a main German offensive in the West, and thus in the area covered by 1914, we find that there are several alternatives to the "normal" sweep through Belgium.

First, of course, one may decide not to invade Belgium at all. The results of the Franco-Prussian War proved that it is possible for German armies to conduct a successful offensive against the French by attacking across the Franco-German border. There are three readily apparent advantages to this plan of attack.

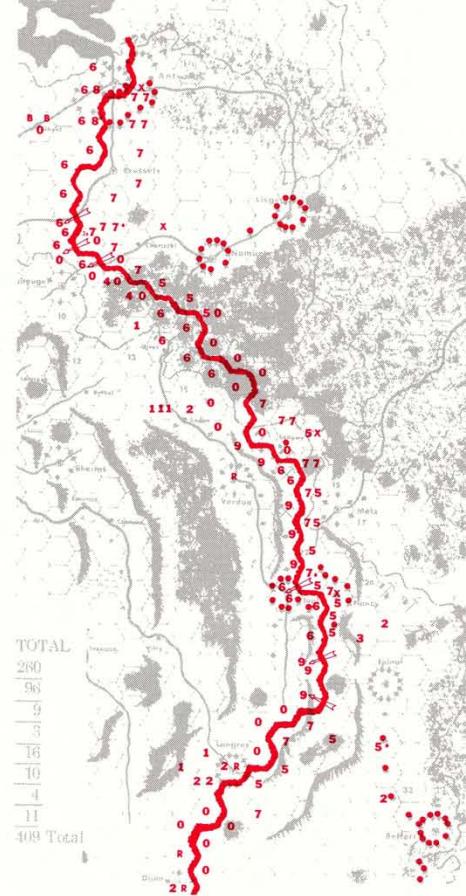
1. The French player, particularly under the revised rules to be presented later, is not stupid. He normally has 14-16 corps plus cavalry and artillery between Lille and French Mobilization Square (FMS) 13. It will take 3 to 5 turns for these forces to get into action at Longwy and much longer to get the front at Belfort. Thus, for at least the first 6 or 7 moves, the whole German army is fighting only one half of the French army.
2. The German does not lose Victory Points for invading Belgium.
3. The British may not appear. This is particularly true if the Germans hold Game Variation Card G-8. Many authorities now agree that England would not have gone to war had the Germans not invaded Belgium.

With this strategy, an attack through the Belfort Gap is extremely important. Most French commanders leave this city weakly defended and an attack in this area serves to cause the French commander to lengthen his lines in order to defend the routes to Paris.

If the German commander decides to attack France through Belgium, a second new strategy presents itself: a German pincers movement with one claw moving through Liege and the other claw striking through Belfort. The attack through the Belfort Gap causes the French to elongate their line and requires the use of all of the cavalry divisions in order to have an unbroken line of units from the Belgian coast to the south edge of the board. Since the French cavalry divisions have only 2 steps and no replacements, the German commander should attack these units whenever they are put in the front line. In fact, German cavalry units should be used in these attacks as often as possible as the French can only hold the square at the cost of the whole division (unless a 6 is rolled) and the victorious cavalry will then be in position to advance through the opened hole or to hold it against a French counterattack since the German cavalry divisions have 4 steps.

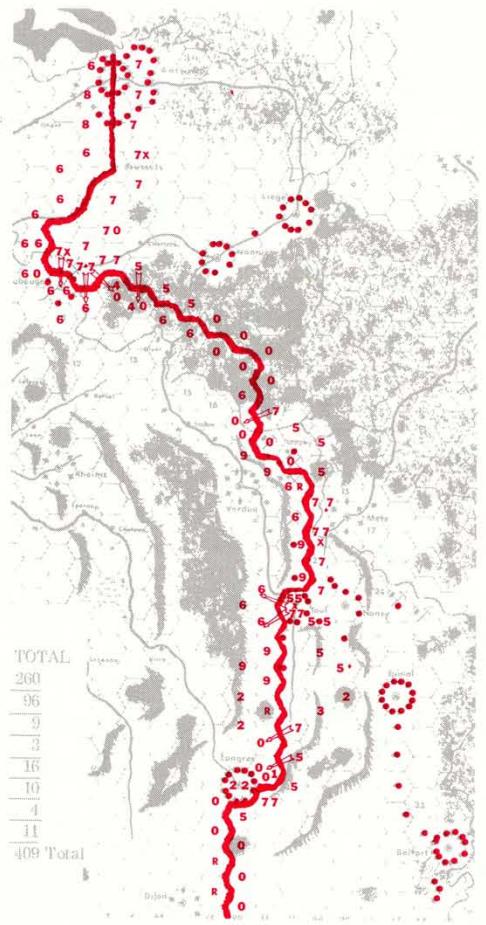
Although the rules to 1914 are quite comprehensive, still they do have some errors which could be corrected by using the following rule changes.

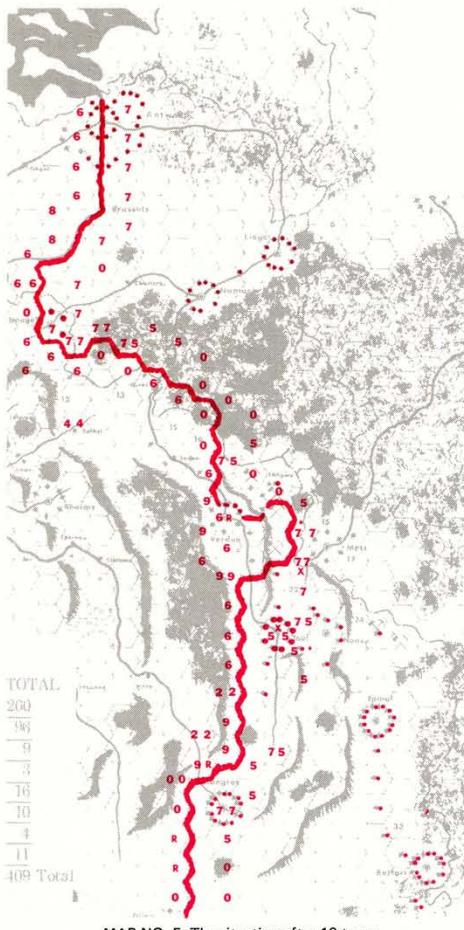
1. Artillery units now have no stacking value and the maximum number of units which can attack through the side of a hexagon is now two corps and any number of artillery units. Only one 305 or 420 unit may be used per hex.
 2. Cavalry units may attack enemy cavalry units by using their attack factor. The defending unit(s) may not be stacked with infantry although the attacking unit(s) may be in which case the attack factors of the infantry and cavalry may be added together.
 3. The French forts of Belfort are 210's.
 4. The German 420 mm mortars were specially constructed by Krupp to destroy the French and Belgian border forts. These guns had special trains to carry them and so are not subject to the rule allowing only three German corps to move by train each turn. This piece can move a maximum of 30 hexes by rail each turn and may use all railroads behind the German lines.
 5. French units may cross into Belgium immediately after the Germans either cross the Belgian border or reduce Liege.
 6. There are no restrictions on either the German or French original deployment of available units. This means that the restrictions listed in the Instruction Folder, page 2, "Prepare for Play," Step 4, lines 9-12 no longer apply.
 7. A new class of victory is now created: the "Moral Victory." Only the Germans can win this victory and they win it if they manage to capture Paris. In the game, Paris is worth only 10 victory points to the Germans should they capture it. In reality, it was much more important. Paris is both the soul and the capital of France and its loss shows both the allies and the enemies of France that it can no longer protect the thing that it holds most dear. A German "Moral Victory" will soon gain Germany other allies which will eventually cause a French surrender by 1915 if Germany has not already won a "Decisive Victory."
 8. The German commander can create Landwehr and Ersatz units from his replacements at one step per brigade.
 9. The full hexes at the South edge of the board such as Dijon, hex BB36, and DD37 can be used by both sides but the half hexes cannot.
 10. Units beginning their turn on a river hex may move off the river during their movement phase without any movement penalty.
- In order to test the strategies described earlier, the following game of 1914 was played. A variable German order of battle was used and the German commander sent 45 "points" of forces to the Eastern Front. These units were all reserve units leaving the following forces available for the West.



MAP NO. 3. After six moves French reserves and the B.E.F. have reached the front. The 6-6-2's are depicted by R's, the 8-14-3's by 8's.

MAP NO. 4. After 7 turns Toul has fallen and EE27 and EE28 are to be attacked. Arrows show direction of new attacks. Note that French counterattacks in the South and in the Ardennes have been successful.





MAP NO. 5. The situation after 10 turns.

26 x 7-12-3
15 x 5-8-3
1 x 3-4-2
11 x (4)-3-4

The original deployment for both the French and German units is shown in Map No. 1.

German units starting on MS (Mobilization Square) 6 proceed to invest Liege by occupying hexes FF14 and GG15 with cavalry on EE14 and EE13. Units from MS7 occupy FF16 and GG16 with cavalry on EE15 completing the encirclement and insuring the destruction of the Belgian Liege garrison. German cavalry occupy EE22 with infantry on FF22 and GG23 and Longwy is indefensible. JJ30 and KK31 are either taken on the first turn or abandoned by the French during their retreat. Belfort falls and the Gap is forced.

Map No. 2 shows the situation after 3 turns. Both sides have sustained heavy losses but all of the German units are up to strength whereas many of the French units are not. The Belgian units are in the Antwerp fortification lines or in Namur. The French have taken up positions behind the Dyle River in the North and on top of the ridges in the South. The economic squares EE22 and FF23 change hands often. Whoever holds them gets attacked and ends up losing too many men. The Germans finally occupy them with cavalry which retreat in the face of a French attack. The French occupiers get counterattacked and lose 4 steps to 1 German step. They soon evacuate and the German cavalry go back.

German units striking through the Belfort Gap cause French reserves to be sent to that area.

Map No. 3 shows the situation after 6 moves. The Germans were not required to send any troops to the Eastern Front. The French second line reserves, the North African Army and the BEF have all arrived at the Front. The Colonials and Reserves go to the southern part of the line while the BEF goes to the north. The French line now runs along the Dyle for 60 or so miles before crossing. The French prepare to launch counterattacks in the south and in the Ardennes while the decimated Belgian corps are withdrawn to Ghent.

The Germans continue to destroy the forts south of Epinal and finally reach Epinal itself. The Germans prepare to launch attacks against W11, W12, and X13 in the north; and against Toul, GG31, and GG32.

Map No. 4 shows the positions after the successful German attacks shown on the previous map. Both Boul and Epinal have fallen and the French line now runs behind the Meuse. In the north, the Germans have not yet attacked Allied forces behind the Dyle. The Germans now attack in four main areas. In the North, Maubeuge and X14 are hit and the French retreat. Other German attacks are launched against Y14 and Z15 resulting in the loss of one step from each British division. The surviving troops retreated as

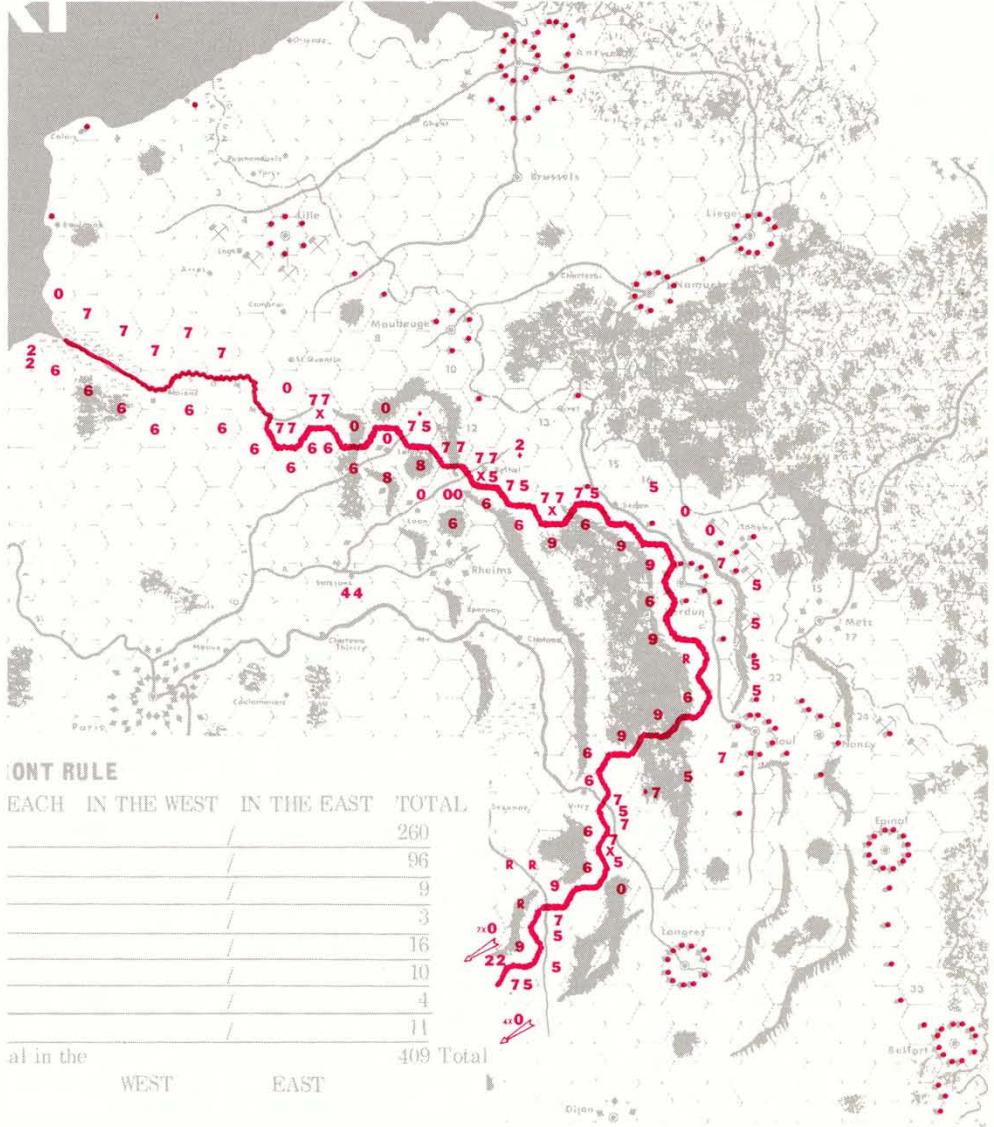
did the other French cavalry in the Ardennes which were also attacked. The French units on DD21 were attacked and retreated. German corps attacking from Toul captured hexes EE27 and EE28. In the south, Langres, EE33, and EE32 also fell on this turn. This series of attacks completely broke the French Meuse line and caused them to retreat to the Argonne. In the center, the French are almost forced out of the Ardennes but they manage to counterattack and force the Germans out of W12. Map No. 5 shows the positions of both sides at the conclusion of turn 10.

In subsequent turns, French counterattacks succeed in recapturing Maubeuge and X14 but these are soon lost to the Germans again. With French reserves in action around Maubeuge, the Germans break the Dyle line by capturing X9 in the face of determined French resistance. Counterattacks by the British corps result in losses which are replaced by the 3 British replacement steps. Eventually, the Allied units from the Dyle line retreat to the Lille area but German gains in the center finally force the Allies to retreat to the Somme.

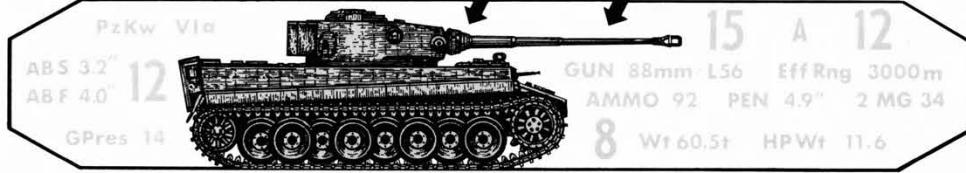
SERIES REPLAY

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MAP NO. 6. The end of the game. At this point the French concede defeat; their situation now hopeless with many units understrength.



DESIGN ANALYSIS



Tom Shaw, besides being the Vice-President of Avalon Hill, has been the most influential personality in the development of wargaming since the hobby got its start. Although he plays down his role in what has been a long and successful association with Avalon Hill and wargames in general, Shaw has provided the impetus and guidance which has led both the company and the hobby to its current place of prominence. Tom has what appears to be the unique gift of assessing games from both the business end and the player's viewpoint. It is a talent which has stood him in good stead during his tour with Avalon Hill.

Don't take his tongue-in-cheek comments on his own ability too seriously. Shaw is without a doubt the father of the Matrix concept and as such stands as one of the very few original game developers alive today.

DESIGN CREDITS:

AFRIKA KORPS, AIR EMPIRE, BISMARCK; C&O/B&O; DOLL HOUSE; FOOTBALL STRATEGY; KRIEGSPIEL; STOCK MARKET; TRUCKS, TRAINS, BOATS and PLANES; VERDICT II, WHAT TIME IS IT?; WORD POWER; BASEBALL STRATEGY;

Partial Design Credits include: D-DAY, WATERLOO, STALINGRAD, MIDWAY, BULGE, BLITZKRIEG, and OUTDOOR SURVIVAL.

August 1973, marked my 13th year with Avalon Hill. During this span, Avalon Hill has been approached by, at conservative estimate, at least 10,000 free lance game designers. Only a handful have been accepted. A great percentage of the offerings were trade-offs of *Monopoly*. The remainder had various and sundry faults ranging from imitation of existing products to complexity beyond the realm of believability. The point here is that there is no shortage of people "designing" games. Perhaps the term is misrepresentative. What the game industry needs is not game "designers" but game "inventors."

Obviously, just about anyone can design a game. But can they *invent* a game? By that I mean are they innovative enough to create a game system totally new; one that is "unlike any other on the market" as we suggest in our form letter sent to prospective designers.

You will note the cover photo for the last issue. Lent to us from the files of one of our company executives, Steve Szekely, it is a rather startling shot of a B-17 "coming atcha." Steve was a belly gunner on this plane during WWII. In all his 35 missions, he only shot down one plane... and that was one of his own. Purely an accident. Accidents happen in all walks of life, including game designing. In fact, my experience tells me that good games are invented more by accident than by design. It is the rare individual who can go to the office on Monday morning, sit down to his desk, and then invent a totally new game concept week after week.

In the wargame field, there really hasn't been anything dramatically new since *Gettysburg*. Oh yes, there have been certain innovations and embellishments but they fall under the category of

improvements to the original concept, not conceptually new in themselves. The wargame today is still much the same as it was back in 1952. For many wargamers, it doesn't really matter; they wait with baited breath for that next new wargame to come on the market. These people are happy with the design; all they are really interested in is the new situation around which the design is tailored. In fact, many would be upset if a truly new concept were to arrive. This means that they would have to learn something new all over again. Fortunately for these players, there isn't a wargame company on the scene that has done anything yet to change the status quo. Someday that may change. It may happen right here at Avalon Hill, especially now that we have rounded up what we consider the finest array of design talent available today, both as permanent staff and as part-time advisors. But when that dynamic new design will come along, no one can guess. I guess that it will happen by accident... just as happened with many of the world's great inventions.

You may recall the famous Thomas Edison anecdote, at the precise moment he flicked the switch that would light up the first electric bulb, he disappointingly bellowed into the bulb; "Speak, speak up I say!"

"The best football game ever invented" was designed by accident. That *Sports Illustrated* rave back in 1961 for my *Football Strategy* game literally changed my entire career and life style. Yes... it was designed by accident... while sitting on the john as a matter of fact. And it only took about 40 minutes to conceive. You might ask at this point, "why did I waste even 40 minutes on a project completely foreign to my then budding career as an advertising executive?"

While my advertising career was budding, my athletic career was about to be nipped in the bud. As I sat there on the throne, I was reflecting on the fact that although I had just completed two years as a defensive cornerback for a flag-football team, I hadn't yanked a flag during the entire time. It would be charitable of one to think this was due to the opposition keeping the plays out of my territory. The truth of the matter was, I was on my back too often to be in a position to grab a ballcarrier's flag. By season's end I had enjoyed a broken finger, sprained wrist, a slipped disc, and a conviction that I better look elsewhere for my athletic kicks. One can say that *Football Strategy* was borne of this conviction. Immodestly speaking, I thought I had designed a helluva game.

At the time I couldn't believe that something like it hadn't already been done, it seemed that simple. I subsequently learned that the simplest things are often the most difficult to conceive. Refusing to believe that the design was so original, I spent weeks combing toy and game outlets in search of a similar product. As unbelievable as it seemed, there was nothing like it... nothing even close. Anywhere. I was, of course, distressed at the number of football games that *did* exist. My initial letters to the big game manufacturers, and their

subsequent rejection, simply echoed the sentiments that there were too many sports games on the market already.

Undaunted, I got out my American flag, repeated to myself that in America even the littlest fellow can make it big, then chickened out and sold my game to a friend. The friend was an advertising salesman who was a tenacious, striving idealist who happened to be nuts on football. He put the game together in a novel way. It was packaged in a tube and retailed for \$3.00. But not until I'd had it thoroughly play-tested by many, many friends in the sporting fraternity including many members of the team. Curiously enough, the mechanics hardly needed changing after all of this testing (which covered at least 100 games). Even my team-mates wives enjoyed the game although their husbands were not overly fond of my showing up early for first half action.

The enthusiasm shared by the womenfolk actually enhanced the sale of the game, as it was promoted through local gift shops as a "great husband-wife" encounter. This premise, although used more than a decade ago, was not altogether forgotten when *Football Strategy* was re-designed last year into the bookcase format; witness the inclusion of a manual entitled "Football Widow's Handbook," a blatant commercial attempt to once again capture the fancy of the female since it is the woman who exerts great influence on buying habits in the toy market. But that's the marketing end of the game business. Sorry for the digression.

Reasons for *Football Strategy*'s great success are varied, and go beyond the design element. That's not pertinent here in this column. What is pertinent is that it involved a new concept in gaming, spawning many imitators for years to come. Even *Sports Illustrated*, itself, got into the act by embellishing my original concepts and tailoring them to fit performances of actual real life players. It became obvious to me that a successful game must be a simple vehicle that provides complexity in the nuances and subtleties of strategy, not in the mechanics of play.

Most free lancers with design ambitions seem to end up with a reverse situation. As a corollary, I need only draw from Scott Duncan's excellent "Design Analysis" column of a previous issue (Vol. 10, No. 1) where he stated that "*Bulge, Afrika Korps, and Stalingrad seem to maintain their positions as favorite games...*"

To me, the reason is obvious. They are simple to learn, easy to play, yet the most challenging to master. Small reason why Spartan International, the only professional game organization afloat outside of the Chess Federation, has selected these "classics" as prize money convention staples. Despite the fact that a myriad of "new" wargames are turned out by an ever growing fraternity of wargame publishers, the elite of the hobby always seem to return to the simple Avalon Hill classics. It is axiomatic, then, that "simplicity in design, complexity in strategy" is the hallmark for game designing success.

Also axiomatic is the fact that never has there been a game inventor who has scored more than once. Even the inventor of *Monopoly* followed with failures.

My own trail to oblivion began immediately after the appearance of *Football Strategy*, and is reproduced here for the benefit of subscribers who may wish to embark upon the same winding path to glory. Your benefit, here, will be from the wisdom of hindsight. Let's now unveil my illustrious failures and determine why they were so.

It should surprise no one that **Baseball Strategy** would be the follow-up to **Football Strategy**. Unfortunately, it didn't come close to matching the latter's initial success, even after both games were added to the Avalon Hill line (and increased to \$4.00). **Baseball**'s lack of success is simple enough. It was a bad game. I became too preoccupied with the "simplicity" bit and overly simplified the game's mechanics. Thus it leaned too much the other way, thus precluding players of the board game from ever executing some of the more subtle managerial strategies. That's why this game was completely overhauled when re-packaged last year while **Football Strategy** was left virtually untouched for the remake.

Upon joining Avalon Hill in 1960, my first design effort was a debacle, **Air Empire!** I attempted to trade off on **Management** which was then a glowing success and our first real intro into schools. No good! I was designing, not inventing. And we subsequently learned that the **Management** concept was too complex for the general market and too simple for the hard-core.

Chancellorsville was dumped in my lap in mid-stream. I never could figure out how to get across the stream, much less get the Confederates out of the woods. The game developed into a board game of hide and seek. In the rush to meet a Toy Fair deadline, too little thought was given to play-balance.

My third attempt was in the area of law. I didn't even know where the courthouse was, let alone develop a game along these lines. But they said, "you're a game inventor, you ought to be able to come up with something - right?"

Wrong! I came up with what I thought was an improvement of the original **Verdict** game. And with the aid of our legal counsel, who had designed the original game, produced an "improved" version that took all of 3 hours to play itself out. We shouldn't have "beaten a dead horse." That makes me 0 for 3.

Not one to panic easily, I quickly followed up these gems with my first version of **Word Power**. That's when management panicked. We hardly had the box wraps delivered when we took **Word Power** off the market. This was a shock! It had just about everything going for it... I subscribed to all the time-tested proven methods of successful game designing (I stole the best bits from all the best sellers); it had a great title, an excellent play-test feedback, and a box design that had won an "Award-in-Excellence" in the Baltimore Art Directors' exhibit. It did, however, contain the one fault that prevented it from being a winner: the objective, that of showing off one's vocabulary, was obscured by cumbersome game mechanics that were neither new or innovation. At 0 for 4, I began to wonder where I went right with **Football Strategy**?

At this point in the Avalon Hill history, a Lindsley Schutz was hired as my "assistant". I believe management was trying to tell me something here. Our first dual effort was **Bismarck**, a not half-bad game. Unfortunately, it was only half-good. But a rousing success at the time! It was a rather quick-play naval game which helped open up a lot of distributional outlets for us. Although it didn't appeal for long to the hard core, a group still in its infancy at this time, it did enjoy relative success by introducing newbies into the cult of wargaming. The decision to discontinue **Bismarck** many years later was a disturbing one, made simply because the level of sophistication in more recent years forced it down in popularity

among our growing legion of hard core following. Besides, naval games were never that good "box office" merchandise. But **Bismarck** did prove one thing; simplicity of design had its merits.

The same simplicity formula was built into **Stalingrad** and **Waterloo** which were released at about the same time as **Bismarck**. These were 90% Schutz's designs. While neither has ever wowed management with sales figures, they continue to be steady repeat-sales titles. That's why we have listed them as "classics" in our recent categorization of game titles.

Having done his bit for humanity, Schutz left Avalon Hill in the early 60's to become a professional college student. At last count, he is still trying to figure out how to play **1914** while supporting himself, his family, and his Volvo in the advertising game.

Having lost my crutch, once again I was on the design spot with management. Management, however, was on the spot with creditors and with this knowledge in mind it was my intention to save the company with a group of winners for the proverbial "11th hour" reprieve. For inspiration, I returned to the scene of my initial success. While in the executive lavatory, the mechanics to three new titles came to me in a flash: "Trucks, Trains, Boats, Planes," "Doll house," and "What Time Is It?" are never-to-be-remember titles that matched **Football Strategy** in design-time (40 minutes). Unfortunately, they did not match it in sales. The first two were "Candy Land" reincarnated, and "What Time Is It?" was designed to teach 3 year-olds how to tell time. There was a minor flaw; the game required players to know how to read first. So much for The Kiddy market.

Avalon Hill was reorganized in 1964 under totally new management. My first effort was **Afrika Korps**, my really first attempt at land-battle design. My job was made easier by the fact that Schutz had completed all the necessary research. While I have learned subsequently that this research contained some inaccuracies, it certainly has not impaired the demand for the game. It, too, is now a "classic." While there was nothing to "invent" here, as it was a continuation of the hex-battle-game-concept of old, there were innovations implemented in **Afrika Korps** that proved highly successful. One embellishment was the "automatic victory" rule, which overcame the Qatara Depression situation which, under normal rules, allowed the British to hold off greatly superior forces with just a token group of units turn after turn. In fact, "automatic victory" was so well received, thought was given to testing it out on previous games such as **Stalingrad**. Here, I brought in some local AH'ers from Johns Hopkins U. and Baltimore Polytechnic to test this possibility. I, myself, played a PBM game with Ken Norris of Scotland. Being thoroughly demolished by Mr. Norris, I withdrew from wargaming in a pout. In fact, my psyche was damaged to the point where I even gave up *designing* wargames in addition to playing them. Besides, the pressures of my increased work-load necessitated a change in this area. Avalon Hill was making a tremendous come back; sales were climbing by leaps and bounds. Thus we found it necessary to look "outside" for design help, a course of action we followed up until 1972 when company growth dictated the implementation of a permanent in-house, research-design-art staff.

While my wargame designing came to a screeching halt, I was still saddled with broadening the non-battle line. We first resurrected **Word Power**

after finding that the bookcase package was proving an instant success for **Shakespeare**, an outside design. Sales of **Word Power** justified this decision, so much so that **Dispatcher**, a dog of long ago, was brought back from the pound as **C&O/B&O**. This turned out to be among my personal favorites. It was a joy to design. Too Bad it wasn't a joy to play. We learned later that its only appeal was to hard core railroad buffs which certainly did not make up large enough an audience to make **C&O/B&O** a classic. The game lasted only 3 years. Egad... I was back in the same old rut.

But not for long! I had suddenly come to the conclusion that I, too, was a game *designer*, not a games *inventor*. All I was doing was trading off of the past, borrowing from supposedly proven design mechanics instead of inventing new ones. All the while I had deluded myself into thinking that I was a game inventor. With this in mind, I now approached the subject in proper perspective. The next game I was to *design* was one on the stock market. Hundreds of outside designs on this subject came to us, and were rejected. I then analyzed those currently available on the commercial retail market. They all had one thing in common. All were based on elements of random luck rather than strategy. Was history repeating itself? Didn't I arrive at this very same conclusion a decade earlier on another subject matter? And wasn't **Football Strategy** born of this very same conclusion?

That's how **The Stock Market Game** came to resemble **Football Strategy**. Incidentally, it took several years to finalize - during which eight different prototypes were tested - before arriving at the final product. Needless to say it became an instant hit. The matrix-concept scored again. In 1971, in competition with other similar products, **The Stock Market Game** "came out on top" in **Chicago Today's Toy Evaluation Program**.

No doubt about it, I had a one-track mind. I was now so preoccupied with the matrix-concept that I became even bold enough to attempt to implement it into a wargame. That's how **Kriegspiel** came into being, a game designed for wargamers by someone who really didn't know anything about wargames. Needless to say, it didn't take the hard core long to reach this verdict, but how **Kriegspiel** does sell to the non-hard-core people... it has been the one game that has done more for broadening our distributional base than any other title. In fact, it now ranks third best in sales behind **Panzerblitz** and **Blitzkrieg**, despite not having the benefit of hard core sales.

What it all boils down to is this: my greatest contribution to the wonderful world of games was the matrix-concept. It revolutionized gaming by taking gaming out of the realm of the traditional luck element mechanics into the more sophisticated area of think and double-think, strategy and counter-strategy. The matrix-concept embodies what I feel are the necessities for games of lasting pleasure: a method by which the outcome is determined by players' decisions, not by whims of chance.

It is my opinion that we have today, far too many games on the market that are re-hashes of old formulas. Even my matrix-concept is getting over-worked. These games are a glut on the market. Frankly, I've seen nothing startlingly new in over a decade. Surely I'm not the last of a vanishing breed?



Panzerblitz Revision Upheld

by Paul D. Mills

Many people have criticized Avalon Hill for revising the PANZERBLITZ scenario cards after the first edition went out of print in September of 1971. They couldn't understand why we'd switch horses in mid-stream. The reason, as stated then and reiterated now, is play balance. After the game was released it was found that several of the situations were hopelessly imbalanced in favor of one side or the other. One of these scenarios was situation No. 6, where the Germans had a sure win if they followed a particular strategy. Therefore, Avalon Hill revised the situation by taking the 6 mine and 8 block counters away from the German OB. To understand why AH thought these steps were necessary, one need only read Paul Mills' article below.

The Situation Card for "Panzerblitz" Situation No. 6 can mislead the German commander and result in the commitment of his forces to positions that greatly reduce the chances of preventing a Russian breakthrough. By referring to the action as a "German Mobile Defense of Position" and being a simulation of the conflicts west of the Dneiper River late in 1943, it seems to imply that taking a mobile defensive posture would enhance German possibilities of victory over the 19th Tank Corps. The card also allows the Kampfgruppe of 24th Panzer to make the initial move. This seems to make most German commanders advance some of their units to positions on board one. There are some sound tactical reasons for creating this type of mobile defense and advancing units to board one; but, in Situation No. 6, a static posture works best. A mobile defense could reduce Russian movement capacity, which is vital to them here. This could be done by destroying Russian armor on the road between Hills 135 and 109 and Hills 126 and 104 or by deliberately sacrificing German half-tracks at 1-T9, 1-R9, 1-P9, 1-L7, 1-C4, or 1-B4, thereby negating the road and forcing Russian units to take slower routes. The fallacy of creating a mobile set-up that basically defends the east-west road along its length is that although it may reduce Russian chances of victory, it unnecessarily exposes German units to Russian fire. This makes a German win much more difficult to come by when compared to the alternative.

On paper it looks as if the 160 Samoknya Ustanokovas and T34's and supporting units of the 19th Tank Corps could easily punch their way through the 24th Panzer's units enroute to their objective. However, if the German commander elects to use a static defense several factors combine to reverse the odds completely. They are the terrain and narrowness of the corridor they must attack in (2500 meters), mines and blocks, and the superior firepower and range of the German tanks and artillery.

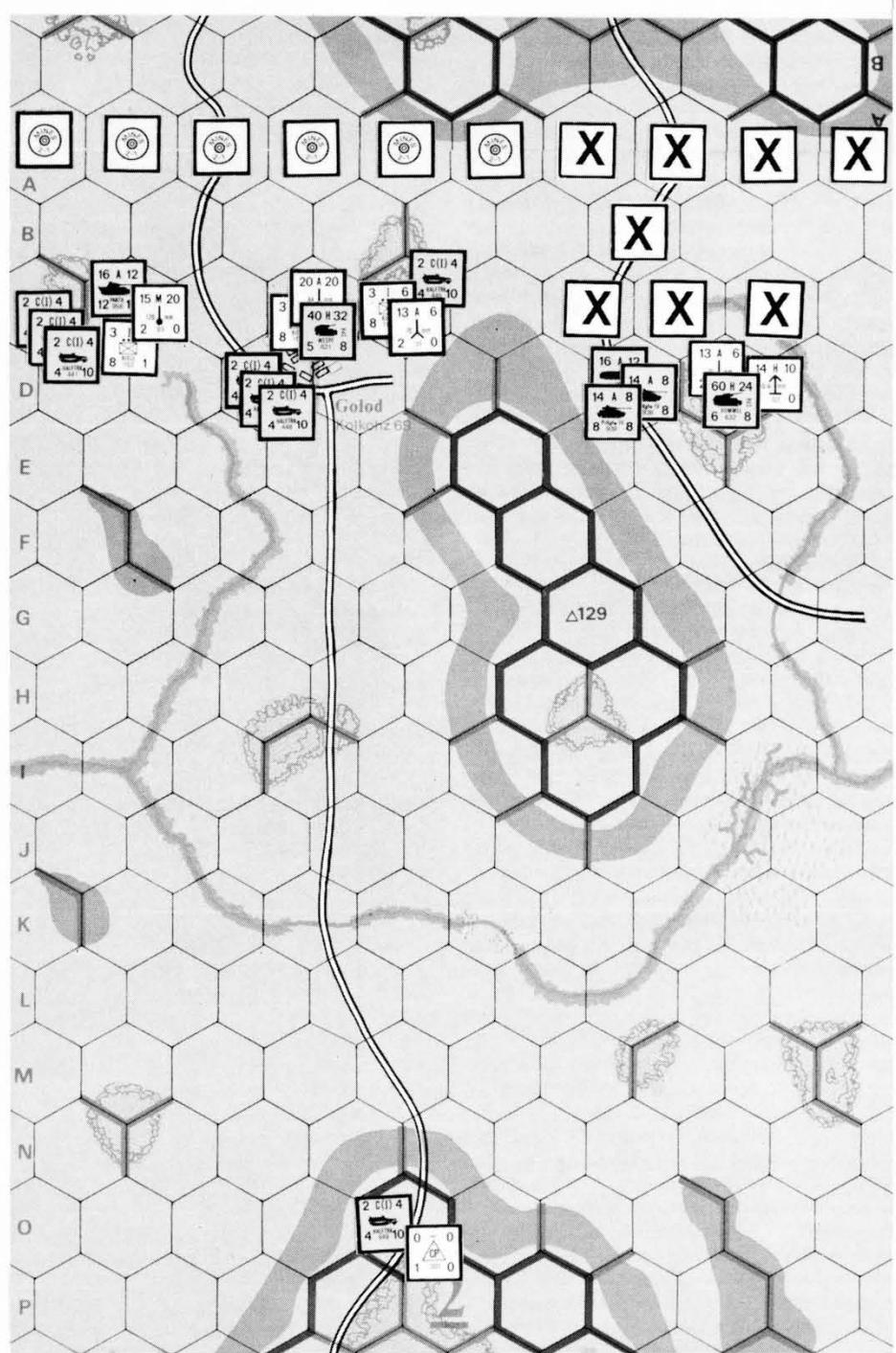
The static plan puts a great burden on the Russian forces. Even if they were completely unopposed, it would take the Russians a minimum of four turns to complete their victory conditions and have at least ten units seven kilometers west of the initial starting point of two and a half kilometers onto board one. The mines and blocks pose the first threat. The odds

another block, or first going into a minefield.

If only one square of the minefields remains unaffected, the only units that could reach the third board and be attacked at less than 1-4 would be the two SU152's. When concentrating on two squares, the Germans can insure themselves of 3-1's (one square a block and one a minefield) against any Russian units with one exception. That would be if 2 Russian S.M.G. Co's. appeared on squares 2-A9 or 2-A10, and that would not pose an immediate threat as it would be best to let them advance and attack them on undoubled squares.

REVISION

Continued on Page 22



Sirs:

After reading "D-Day Defended," I was indeed pleased to know that someone other than myself believed the Germans had a very good chance of winning! However, I would like to point out some faults I noticed in the German set-up for game 2 as recorded.

No doubt there will be some who disagree with my strategy, but I think in this game, German static divisions were too often relegated to the western-most beaches (Normandy, Brittany & Bay of Biscay). I believe these divisions would have been of more use in Pas de Calais. If they were there, not only would they be of use defending the eastern beaches, but even if one of the other beaches were attacked, there would still be time to pull them into a defensive line in the Low Countries. By placing them on the western beaches, they are only useful if attacked right where they are stationed.

After all, isn't it the object of the German TOC/E the Allies to attack in the most remote beach from Germany, and, only by strengthening North Sea and Pas de Calais can the German player accomplish this.

To prove that the defenses of Calais were not all that strong, I experimented several times with the situation.

I found that although a bloody battle would ensue, in which the Allies took particularly heavy casualties, they would still be able to win without being a Patton. One of the major reasons for this is the fact that the Germans would be forced to attack in 2-3 segments rather than as a whole. This is because the Panzer divisions east and west of Calais would not arrive early enough to support the forces already present. Later yet would come the straggling static divisions from the Bay of Biscay.

The one key in attacking Pas de Calais successfully is the capture of the three fortress cities, Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne. In the case of game 2 as noted, the two former cities were held by only one static division each. In these cases, 1-1 or 2-1 attacks usually result in the destruction of the defenders. As for the 6-6-4 in Boulogne, one or two SAC attacks should do the job. Once these three cities are taken by the Allies, they are on the continent to stay. Even though it will take about 3 weeks to establish a complete beachhead, it will not be sufficient time for the Germans to unite.

What all this comes down to is that static divisions are needed more in Pas de Calais than in the Bay of Biscay. If there were only a few more static divisions in Pas de Calais, given this situation, the Allies *WOULD* be forced to attack farther from the Rhine, thus giving the Germans their first bloodless victory.

This is the key of all games; initial placement.

Mark Matuschak
Uniontown, PA

★★★★★

Dear Sir:

While other parts of the country with large populations of wargamers have successfully handled their difficulties, (i.e. MOW in Michigan, NEWA in New England, etc.), California remains the chaotically-run strip of land on the Pacific which Easterners have claimed all along.

While SICL holds an occasional convention in Los Angeles or San Diego – and once-in-a-while gets as far up as San Francisco, the real wargamers who want to sit down and *play wargames* are almost totally out of luck. The organizations which do exist are either too generalized (i.e. SICL) or too localized (i.e. Main Street Wargamers).

So, I've come up with a solution *NorCal Organized Wargamers*. The name itself, as you've probably guessed (and as Lew Pulisher is probably beating his fists against the walls because of), is patterned after a group – or should I say the group – in Michigan with a similar title. It fits the concept of the organization well, though, as we have indeed tried to follow in the footsteps of Michigan Organized Wargamers.

Our group now numbers forty members – that is, forty out of the estimated three hundred gamers who reside in this part of the country. Up to now, our monthly meetings have been relatively small and have been loosely structured. We haven't yet begun charging "dues" of any sort for fear of scaring new members away, though many of our present members feel that we should begin doing so in order that our activities may increase in number.

What do we do? Well, as I've said, we hold monthly meetings at each of our two chapters (we have one chapter in the Bay Area and one in

Letters to the Editor ...

Sacramento) in order to discuss future plans and to do the one thing that many clubs have forgotten about – playing wargames. We also plan to hold one convention per year, probably in the winter so as to avoid competition with the wave of summer cons in various parts of the nation, and to give non-members something to do during the latter half of the year. Future plans include a member-rating system, tournaments in all three of the major branches of wargaming (Miniatures, Board-gaming, and Diplomatic-type Games), a library of gaming publications for use by all members on an equal basis, an "operation contact" service within the organization, and a newsletter (unlike those which are full of useless information, our newsletter will deal only with those things pertaining directly to NCOW).

If it need be said, the purpose of this letter is twofold: (1) To increase the number of members & chapters in NCOW – and establish communication with similar groups who may be of help to us, and (2) To show those who may be thinking about starting a club in their area that it is both possible and worthwhile – to encourage such organizations to take root in other states.

Pat Carole
Lodi, CA

★★★★★

Dear Sirs:

I have a complaint to make. You go through all the trouble of designing, producing, and marketing a game; but after the initial advertisement, never again mention it. And in this case, I think it happens to be one of your best games. I hope you print this so people will see it and take my advice and buy the game. They will enjoy playing it very much.

OUTDOOR SURVIVAL is a short, easy-to-learn game. Well, hardcore may think that that devalues it right there. But believe me, (and I consider myself a hardcore with six years experience), you will enjoy it more the more you play it. After all, look at STALINGRAD and AFRIKA KORPS. They are easy, and you can't say they're not popular.

Depending on the number of players, the game can be played in anywhere from one half hour to an hour and a half.

The game can be played well by someone who has only played a few times. You can be playing like an expert after only five games.

I am president of the History Games Club at our school. We have about twenty members, plus two faculty sponsors. About one fourth of the members are "hardcores," and the rest novices or average gamers. I had at least one or two members from each group playing the game, and heard no complaints, (except when they died). In fact, most of them loved it.

When there is nobody to play with, and you're in the mood for a game; you can play solitaire in **OUTDOOR SURVIVAL** much better than most other games. Because you are playing against nature, it's impossible to favor either side. So... why don't you do a RBG on **OUTDOOR SURVIVAL**?

There are generally two main strategies for game two. The safest and most used is to follow the river most of the way and then either stay on it to the end, or make a break for the edge about two thirds of the way across. The only drawback to the river is its slowness. The other way is to go up the first river you cross, and replenish your food and water at the swamp and then cut through the mountains. After this is all clear terrain, which is the fastest way. If you have luck with the die, you usually end up winning with a C-5.

I hope this article has enlightened you to a new and realistic but easy and playable game. After playing **OUTDOOR SURVIVAL** you will agree, I'm sure, that it is a great game. Why don't they do a **READERS BUYERS GUIDE** on **OUTDOOR SURVIVAL**?

gasp
wheeeeeezzzz!

Tim Weege
Roselle, Illinois

Dear Sir:

After playing the Battle of Prochorovka several times (**Panzerblitz** – scenario 10), I have concluded that two rule modifications would help liven up the action more and give a more realistic "feel" to the scenario.

1) Suspension of the rule requiring all German units to enter the game on turn one.

2) Prohibition of truck units from being used by themselves as blocking forces on roads.

The first rule modification is necessary simply because the German player has too many units – 47 to be exact – all of which must enter through a very narrow corridor on the very first turn. Usually the Soviet player will place some sort of blocking unit (a truck or anti-tank battery) in the gap between hills 104 and 126 on the southern-most board (board 1) so as to prevent any German units from going too far down the road. Since the road between these hills is the quickest way to the main battlefield, the German player usually finds himself in a huge traffic jam – he is literally squeezed off of the board (a very unrealistic occurrence). The second rule modification prevents the Soviet player from blocking roads with unarmed truck units. By placing truck units by themselves on road hexes (along with anti-tank units in other hexes), the Russian player can set up twelve delaying points – all of which must be attacked and destroyed by the German player before he can even reach the main battlefield. Yet the Soviet truck units, by themselves, have no defense capability (they are unarmed). Hence it is unrealistic to allow Russian truck units from being used by themselves in hexes as blocking units. They should each be stacked

with an anti-tank unit or kept in rear areas away from the path of the main German advance.

This last rule modification, besides getting rid of an unrealistic game tactic, has a profound effect on the game strategy itself. The German forces can reach the main battlefield (on board 3) several turns earlier. This means that the Soviet tank forces must withstand the German attacks for several turns longer. No longer can the Soviet player afford to sit back and wait for the German tank assaults on board 3. The Soviet player is forced to launch strong attacks and counter attacks of his own – just as the Russian tank forces actually did at Prochorovka thirty years ago.

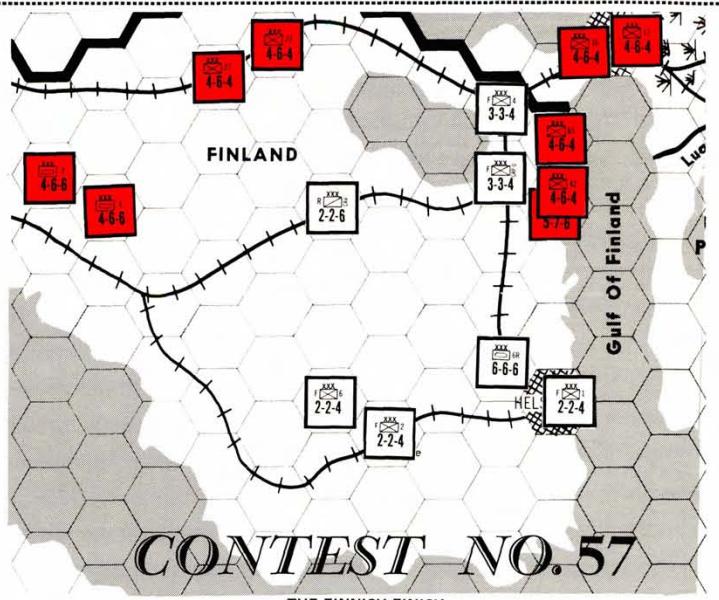
Robert Chiang
Berkeley, California 94708

★★★★★

Dear Sirs:

In the May–June issue (Vol. 10, No. 1) of the **General** you had an article called "Experimental Panzerblitz." In the section of this article where Mr. Thomas wrote about the anti-personnel weapons of tanks, he stated that the only machine guns tanks should be counted as having are enclosed ones; "Those where the gunner does not have to expose himself to infantry fire to man the weapon." Later on, he wrote that the Hetzer tank destroyer should not be counted as having a machine gun because the only one it has is mounted in the open, on top of the tank. Actually, the Hetzer's machine gun could be operated from *inside* the tank, so that the gunner would not be shot at while firing the weapon. So anyone playing "Experimental Panzerblitz" should count the Hetzer as having one machine gun.

Rolf Luchs
Wheaton, IL



The above situation shows the Finnish front at the end of the German player's 2nd turn of **STALINGRAD**. The Russian player, gambling on a docile Finnish front has been caught in a low odds counterattack after having experienced terrible die-rolls on the first turn: three Russian corps are isolated with the Axis forces still virtually intact. It's the Russian's move – what should he do? To enter this issue's contest choose one of the below options and indicate on the map how you would execute that option.

To restate the problem: no reinforcements are forthcoming; while not do-or-die, it is still a very critical situation; the troops involved are always needed on the main front and the longer it takes to capture Finland the more damage it does to the Russian cause. Yet, failure of a risky attack could mean utter disaster for the Russians. In your judgement, what is the best, most productive option?

To enter; select your option, show on the map how you would execute that option, and fill out any and all attacks on the provided chart. Contest entry deadline is October 30th. To be valid all entries must include a listing of the top 3 articles in this issue in the numerical order of your preferences.

OPTIONS:

- A.) Let the entrapped units fend for themselves and establish a containing front.
- B.) Counterattack to relieve the trapped units.
- C.) Attack every possible unit at any odds and hope for the best.
- D.) Attempt one decisive, preemptive counterstroke ignoring trapped units.
- E.) Concentrate on original plan – attack a few choice units at high odds, preferably those encircling trapped units.

ATTACKER	DEFENDER	ODDS

Best 3 Articles:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

READER BUYER'S GUIDE

TITLE: RICHTHOFEN'S WAR SUBJECT: WWI TACTICAL AERIAL COMBAT PRICE: \$9.00

RICHTHOFEN'S WAR seems to have been a good start for our "new era" of games. Were one to try to describe its ratings in one word, we'd have to use "consistency" as that one word. Of the six games rated thus far by the RBG, RICHTHOFEN'S finished no worse than 4th in any of the 9 rated categories, and did manage one record in besting PANZERBLITZ in the Play Balance category by .46 of a point. The true indicator of the game's success was its cumulative rating of 2.52. The previous best was the 2.58 of PANZERBLITZ.

All categories rated high; none hitting the 3.00 mark, which is in itself, good. It still seems that some people cannot follow instructions however. We continue to get occasional letters praising the game up and down and then rating it with 9's. Remember, in our rating system, the lower the number the better the game. Our random sample doesn't determine who is filling out the cards correctly so until you figure out the system, the ratings will have to take it on the chin.

The one category which may not ring true though is that of GAME LENGTH. The answers on this were so widely diverging that it seems likely many people rated different versions of the game. Nevertheless, the result below is not all that misleading—it stands as the shortest playing time yet recorded in the RBG. The varying game lengths in RICHTHOFEN'S WAR are one of its assets. Many versions of the Basic Game can be over in 5 minutes while the Campaign Game can take weeks to play. Somewhere in between there should be a scenario which fits into everybody's schedule.

The type of action in RW varies every bit as much as does the playing time. Dogfights, bombing, strafing, balloon busting, photo recon, and artillery spotting are all available in RICHTHOFEN'S. And for a real challenge, you can throw them all in together in the Campaign Game and see if you can fight your way to acc status. The 'personal' building-on approach of RW is one we've never tried before. Apparently, it works!

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN: Put simply, the results can be considered like this: Anything under 2.00 is pretty darn fantastic. Scores ranging from 2-3 are excellent while 3's must be considered good. 4 through 4.5 would be considered fair, with the upper half of the 4.5 combination considered poor. Anything rated higher than a 6 indicates a dire deficiency and should merit either immediate attempts at redesign or dropping from the line. As you can see, what happens to the game after initial release is in large part up to you. If there are dire deficiencies we are relying on the RBG to spot them.

1. Physical Quality	2.28
2. Mapboard	2.62
3. Components	2.12
4. Ease of Understanding	2.63
5. Completeness of Rules	2.94
6. Play Balance	2.60
7. Realism	2.66
8. Excitement Level	2.39
9. Overall Value	2.45
10. Game Length	58 minutes

THE QUESTION BOX

FRANCE, '40

Q. Are interception missions, which are flown before any movement takes place, considered to occur before the initial movement phase (at the beginning of which units are determined to be in supply) begins?

A. Yes.

Q. If an attacking unit, due to an AR or BR result, is forced to retreat into a hex occupied by a friendly unit also actively participating in the same attack, is the first unit destroyed or may it retreat onto the second friendly unit and then retreat again with it?

A. It is destroyed.

Q. If a BR result is obtained in an attack where the defenders are surrounded by the attackers' ZOC, are the defenders eliminated before the attackers retreat, since they must retreat first?

A. Yes.

Q. If a unit is out of supply, can it move at least one hex?

A. Dependent on the situation. However, if a unit has less movement factors than required to move into a hex it may not move.

Q. If a defending unit is in a forest and behind a river and is attacked with aerial support how is the die roll affected?

A. Nothing is added or subtracted. The defender can not obtain better than a -2 addition to the die roll regardless of terrain advantage.

Q. Suppose a neutral Dutch unit is on square 265, and a German unit moves from 232 to 264, and then into the Netherlands at 297, thus causing the Dutch unit to become hostile and exert its zone of control. Has the German unit left a zone of control by moving through 264 to get to 197?

A. No, because the Dutch unit doesn't become hostile until the 7-6 has left 264 and is in 297.

Q. German reinforcements come on the board in eastern edge hexes north of the Maginot line. Does this mean from hex No. 1 through and including hex No. 21, and is this changed in any way if no Maginot line exists?

A. Yes; no to the latter question.

AH PHILOSOPHY

Continued from Page 2

print on the Opponents Wanted Page, and moreover that 55% of you have found an opponent in your area via the Opponents Wanted section. It would appear then that the GENERAL still seems to be the best way to contact opponents. Fortunately, 45% of you never take out an ad or we'd be swamped with applications. As it is we have to do some judicious editing to handle the overflow. The small percentage of you who take ads out every month would be doing your comrades a favor if you cut it down to essential notices. Some of you who are just blowing your own horn may be taking away valuable space from someone with a genuine need. The most widely sought information on the opponents wanted page are FTF players, pbm opponents, and discontinued games respectively. The average ad draws 3.4 responses and results in games being played to a successful conclusion approximately 77% of the time. This is a significant statistic. In former years, most pbm games came to an abrupt end after a few turns when one player or the other would give up in a fit of rage. It shows the maturity which the hobby is gaining.

A more interesting subject was the topic of an Avalon Hill sponsored convention in Baltimore. A rousing 44% said they would definitely make an effort to attend while we got a "perhaps" answer from 39% more. Seems encouraging but "making an effort to attend" and actually showing up are two very different things. We'll have to think it over but at least now we're talking about it. The one thing that really surprised us on this topic was the matter of preferred prizes. 47% indicated games as their favorite prize whereas we had thought that you could get a game anywhere but a trophy represented something that had to be earned. Apparently, the Readers Response has shown us something new here.

Section III of the feedback card helped us nail down your opinion of game periods more accurately. By asking what games you definitely would NOT buy we were able to fill in the gaps left by the favorite period question of the June issue. As expected, WWII emerged as the favorite period—drawing a favorable response of 94%. It was followed in order by the Modern, Naval, Civil War, Revolutionary, Napoleonic, WWI, Ancient, Non-historic, Nuclear, Medieval, Science Fiction, Political and Basketball entries. The problem now is to find out how the hard core identifies with the population at large in regards to sports and political games. That will be one of our aims in the next Readers Response.

The big news in Baltimore these days is the opening of the Avalon Hill game room for public use. Our previous "marble room" is now going to be the site for the gathering of local wargamers for the purposes of playtesting new AH designs. The rules are simple: anyone may participate simply by filling out the Avalon Hill IGB application and is welcome to come to any of the regularly scheduled Saturday sessions. We ask only that you handle yourself in a gentlemanly manner and do nothing to detract from the primary purpose of playtesting new designs. Other games may be played on the premises only if there is sufficient room after providing for the needs of the playtesters and you supply your own games. Parts and games may be purchased at this time from the supervising staff member. Admittance will be limited to the game room at 1501 Guilford Avenue, in Baltimore. Tours of the

entire plant cannot be conducted. Use of the room is limited to Saturdays, between 10 and 5 when a R&D man will be present to explain the subject of the day's testing. People who prove to be a liability rather than an asset will have to be asked to leave. We make no guarantees but welcome everyone to give it a try.

Can you drop in if you just happen to be visiting Baltimore? Sure, but the game room and access to members of our design staff is limited to Saturdays at the stated hours. Sorry, but otherwise, our R&D team would be harassed constantly to the point of never getting anything done. And we'll be doing other things with the game room too — like the official AH Football Strategy League which will meet to contest gridiron superiority every Saturday against the likes of Avalon Hill sage and Vice President, Thomas Shaw — noted designer of the country's best sports games. SO... if you're in the Baltimore area drop us a card and ask to register for IGB and/or the AH Football Strategy League. The Avalon Hill gameroom is where it's at!



PANZERBLITZ

Continued from Page 20

Since it is impossible for Russian infantry and guns to reach board three without being transported, the Germans will most likely concentrate their firepower on units capable of reaching board three and transporting them there. The following chart shows the maximum German attack factors available (not using CAT possibilities):

Square	Armored Target	Inf/Other Target
2-A1	127	85
2-A2	127	85
2-A3	127	79
2-A4	240	175.5
2-A5	318 defender doubled	207.5 d.d.
2-A6	248	148 d.d.
2-A7	214	114
2-A8	201	114
2-A9	201 d.d.	112 d.d.
2-A10	201 d.d.	112 d.d.

Given the German requirements for victory, this plan insures at least a marginal one by utilizing the terrain. This is due to the spotting rule and the fact that all German units are safely hidden in woods or the village of Golod, meaning the Russians must first cross the minefields or blocks and the murderous cross-fire covering them before they can attack ANY German unit.

This plan also takes advantage of the superior range of the German guns. It does it by putting them much closer to the action than normal. This allows German AT weapons to double their AF's in most cases against armored targets because they are firing at half range or less. It also helps the HE class weapons by allowing them to attack armor at their normal AF for the same reason. There is a temptation to put the Hummel and Wespe into positions where they can utilize indirect fire, but the resultant loss of 50 AF's against armor could be critical.

Therefore, Situation No. 6 becomes an impossible one for the Russians. That is, they will not be able to gain a victory of a higher magnitude than the Germans without an incredible streak of sixes rolled for the minefields.



HASN'T IT HAPPENED TO YOU?



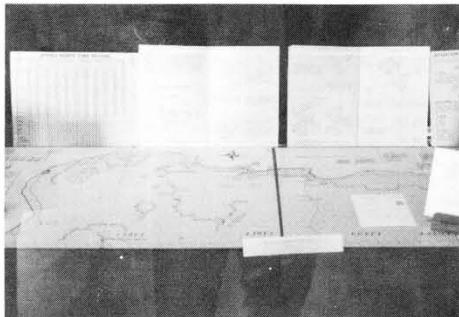
The classic AH tournaments were the major events at East Coast II in Farmington, Conn and Maine's DEWCON I, outdrawing both miniatures and Diplomacy in popularity. The divisional winners for East Con were Tom Eller in the Afrika Korps division, Paul Siragusa in Bulge, and Ray Clark in both Stalingrad and Waterloo. Siragusa was crowned the overall champion of the event. Clark later proved his prowess again by defeating master player George Phillips in the Stalingrad finals at DEW CON to cop top honors at that gathering.

Gen Con VI, the nation's oldest wargaming convention, was once again an outstanding success; drawing over 300 gamers to the two day affair. Wisconsin favorite Bob Reuschlein proved to be the toughest competitor in the WATERLOO tournament as he edged out our own Donald Greenwood who had made the pilgrimage to Lake Geneva for the second time. Our congratulations go out to Gary Gygax and the LGTSA for another excellent affair.

James Rush walked away from the Spartan Mount Prospect II Convention with \$40 in cash and a trophy for emerging victorious in that Avalon Hill tournament. Thomas Isner and Paul DeVolpi came in 2nd and 3rd respectively. The Chicago affair drew a two day attendance of 120. Things weren't quite as productive down south where the Macon, GA con drew a two day attendance of 60. Allan Edsell II of Birmingham placed first in the Avalon Hill competition there and took home \$30 in cash and a trophy. It appears to have been another outstanding convention season.

The Interest Group concept seems to be one which is catching on. We have been informed of the existence of Interest Group St. Louis which meets under the direction of Oliver Wischmeyer at the University of Missouri in St. Louis at the Florissant Road exit on I-70. Avalon Hill and miniatures gaming is said to abound at their monthly meetings. For more information call Oliver at 761-0626 after 10 PM.

Staff member Bruno Sinigaglio was responsible for the AFRIKA KORPS display set up in the showcase at the Material Testing Directorate at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds shown below. Moves were made every couple of days and a large following was in evidence about the showcase as the Germans moved eastward. Utilizing a bypass and sudden retrograde on Tobruch the Germans managed a narrow victory. More important than the game however was the large amount of interest stirred up in the building. Setting up such displays seems like a great way to foster wargaming clubs in your college or high school.



Infiltrator's Report

If you think we lay it on a little too thick in the magazine sometimes, take a look at the pitch we give our wholesalers. The following blurb is one of many humorous, promotional press releases which we use to pester major buyers into stocking Avalon Hill games for you. Is it any wonder they're so hard to find?



"OUTDOOR SURVIVAL's the name and promotion is the game as Avalon Hill's Vice President Thomas Shaw and R & D man Randy Reed discuss the mind-boggling design innovations in Avalon Hill's latest simulation classic with noted syndicated radio and TV personality Dorothy Collins. Resplendent in its bookcase packaging, OUTDOOR SURVIVAL opened up a whole new field for simulation games as Avalon Hill took the initiative in tapping the outdoor enthusiasts market with a game about wilderness skills. Players maneuver across a board representative of 13,200 square miles of wilderness terrain in an effort to reach civilization before being overcome by the environment. Packed with every game is an Outdoor Survival primer compiled by Stackpole Books, leaders in the field of outdoor publications, which fully illustrates, in text and pictures, the techniques of direction finding, signaling, making shelter, building fires, and anything else you'll need to know to get along in the out of doors. Said Dorothy: "This makes me wish I'd never quit the Camp Fire Girls!" As millions of Dorothy's national talk show fans discovered, OUTDOOR SURVIVAL does not play itself out in a few sittings. Five different scenarios allow the recreation of virtually dozens of true-to-life situations which vary in their complexity according to the expertise utilized by the players. Like all Avalon Hill games of skill, OUTDOOR SURVIVAL is a study in concentration and a battle of minds as players struggle to settle on a strategy that will outdo their opponent. A glance at the accompanying photo will bear out the game's value as an instructional tool in the teaching of survival tricks. Note how the more experienced Shaw has utilized the fancy footwork, flawless sense of timing, and knowledge of evasive tactics garnered from playing the game to secure the strategic seat next to Dorothy, thus denying it to his younger adversary."

THE GENERAL

The success criterion stated in the explanatory copy of Contest No. 56 suggested that a ratio between damage meted out versus damage sustained is a good measure of performance in our contest. This is partly true. The overriding consideration was the raw probability of inflicting damage: to destroy the balloon requires five more hits, but the BR/f2b is already in a precarious A/D situation — each additional hit will reduce his speed by one movement point and his climb by 50 meters.

This is the quandry. To shoot down the balloon, the BR/f2b's pilot must be aggressive and 'close in' for good shots, but in doing so, the aircraft is exposed to more intensive AA and MG fire. This can be mitigated by a variety of tactics. Three of the more obvious are: 1.) use of the rear gun which allows the pilot to fire in two successive attack phases and to attack from one or two hex ranges without risking destruction in a spontaneous ignition of the balloon; 2.) the rear gun can fire on the defensive phase to lessen the spotting problem; and 3.) the four corner hexes (2 hex range) offer significantly less AA fire for rear-firing aircraft than the other close hexes (.8 hits on an average turn as opposed to 1.4 hits).

None of these hints are sure fire tricks to ensure the destruction of the balloon but they do facilitate the establishment of a favorable rate of attrition which is the key to victory. The aggressive winners of Contest No. 56 are listed below with the probable hits inflicted on the balloon as opposed to the number of hits received from anti-aircraft fire: R. Wand, Madison, WI 4.8/2.4; R. Peterson, Torrance, CA 4.8/3.0; J. Racoosin, Alamogordo, NM 4.4/2.4; M. Prohl, Rockville, MD 4.0/1.8; K. Sprague, Tampa, FL 4.0/1.8; J. Attebury, Roseville, CA 4.0/2.8; M. Uhl, Crofton, MD 4.0/2.8; S. Knoop, Lackland AFB, TX 3.6/0.6; J. Folsom, Kensington, MD 3.6/1.6; and R. Bacon, Albuquerque, NM 3.2/2.2.

Harley Anton has announced the formation of the Professional Wargamer's Association (PWA). Already 60 members strong, Harley's group is interested in sponsoring professional tournaments for cash prizes. Their first tournament gets underway October 1st and lists competition in AFRIKA KORPS, WATERLOO, STALINGRAD, D-DAY, BULGE and PANZERBLITZ. The entry fee is \$1 for members. For further information on the PWA write Harley at his 2313 Wexford Ln, Birmingham, Ala 35216 address.

LOYAL SUBSCRIBER DEAL: This month we offer 3 very special prizes for sale to the avid collector. Going up on the block is the original artwork for 3 discontinued Avalon Hill games: MANAGEMENT, VERDICT II, and GETTYSBURG (hex version). We make no claim as to these items being complete or playable but they are the original artwork from which these games were printed. Collectors may have an interest in owning such materials so we are offering them to our subscribers for \$15.00 each. There is, of course, only one of each so we can accept only 3 offers. Therefore, send NO money! Merely, write us saying that you want to purchase the item in question. We will hold a drawing for the three lucky winners and notify them to send in their money at that time.

THE GENERAL

OPPONENTS WANTED

Average player seeks pbm opponents in AK, F-40, ifft anything. Interested in Sci-Fi wargames will refer to such. Dennis Cook, 1406 Linda Vista Dr., Birmingham, Ala. 35226, 822-0059.

Average High school Age player desires FTF player in most All games. Any wargaming clubs here? Howie P. Miller, 4749 Overwood Circle, Birmingham, Ala. 35222, 595-3251.

Wanted ex. arty, person to help figure out a counter battery system for P-Blitz. Army sound and Flash, (Hohenlohe Batteries.) Stephen Carter, Rt. 11 Box 64, Florence, Ala. 35630, 700-7700. Someone is buying AH games here. I checked. All I ask is that you pay me. Pay for RBB, Midway, RSW, AK, Sgrad, P-Blitz and B-Krieg. Wally Innan, 29180 Aulphon Lo, Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401, 345-1850.

Realistic searches, accurate arrivals, fighter quality, ZOC's, more included when you PBM Hard Core. I am a member of the rules, you pick your side. Richard Cochran, 1014 Moreland, Phoenix, AZ 85008, 275-3723.

Origins moderated now just \$2.50 a game. Historical versions are ready any time. Small wad for other versions. Good turn sheets. Small beland, 6721 N. 12th Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85253.

FTF opponent B-Krieg, B-Krieg, D-Day, Sgrad.

Average player, expert player, all games in this area? Myron Hazen, 3800 N. Germino, Tucson AZ 85705, 887-9415.

KONIGTIGER is out to conquer central US. Will PBM or FTF most AH wargames in area interested in joining us are also invited to reply.

Frank Lady, 111, 1912 Brookhaven, Jonesboro, AR 72362, 913-826-9264.

Ashington Graf von Bee is seeking competent Allied opponents to fight against in his Albatross DVA in R-War. Also FTF most other AH games. Sieg! Brian Swisher, 1134 Lima, Burbank, CA 91055, 848-9089.

Would like to sell D-Day good condition. Any clubs or individuals? Area would like to join. Mark Torrey, 6316 Edgeron Way, Carmichael, CA 95805, 967-9144.

Will sell, Sgrad, AK, Bulge, Origins, Azino, Fz-blitz. For more info contact: Todd J. Roseman, 66 Montebello St., Villa Vista, CA 92010. California citizen soldier will oppose all who appreciate a strategy game in the AF selection. Tete a Tete any game in the AF selection.

13 year old looking for opponents and wargame clubs in Wash area, will play Outdoor Survival.

Dennis Walki, 7620 Mountainide Dr., Washington, DC 20014, 800-521-7784.

Sale Oppressor and Krieg plus Dippy, F-6.6. Wanted Rich-War, F-40. Want to sell Sci-Fi games? PBM

Luft, Alan Scholz, 750 N. Gulf Blvd., Bellair Shores, FL 33335, 955-2780.

Wanted: opponents to be destroyed by our forces.

FTF, D-Day, Africa, Origins, Outdoor Survival, P-Blitz, Midway, Blitz, Rich-War and

side cast for directions. Karl Wasmuth, R&Z, Box 343A, Groveland - Leesburg, FL 32736, 429-2999.

Jr. high boy wants PBM opponents for Afrika Korps. Prefer another Jr. high boy or girl. Christopher Kuhm, Rt. 3 Box 1651, Leesburg, FL 32748, 877-1702.

Don't be afraid! Average player of high school and up. Want to play for FTF for any AH game and others. John Long, 1712 Whaley Ave., Pensacola, FL 32503, 432-7222.

College age player of good ability desires face to face opponents for all AH Wargames. I own: Glenn Tempeli, 2701 SE 6th St., Pompano Beach, FL 33061, 305-946-2000.

FTF, P-Blitz, B-Krieg, D-Day, I am interested in forming info pool for R-War. Will answer all letters. Jim Richardson, 1000 1/2 W. 17th Ave., Lakewood, CO 80210, 313-4257-3935.

Average adult player wishes PBM opponents for P-Blitz, B-Krieg, Luft, Midway and R-40. Wish to buy Bismarck, Anzio, Stalingrad, AK semi price. James Lamberts, 2661 Via Del Sol, Mission Viejo, CA 92673, 714-360-5460.

Novice player desires PBM opponent who is willing to share PBM kit. I take one. John Castro, 1301 So. Atlantic No. 319, Monterey Park, CA 91754.

Novice player of high school age wants PBM or FTF opponents for D-Day, Blitzkrieg, Origins.

Michael Hunter, 504 Lippitt Ln., Sacramento, CA 95838, 916-454-5640.

Excellent player of 12-13 would like opponents for PBM, P-Blitz, Luft, Jutland, D-Day, Midway, Blitz, U-Boat and any other games. Have PBM for P-Blitz only. Bradley Nozzi, 135 Lonith, San Francisco, CA 94102, 661-4006.

Novice player of PBM, Sgrad, AK, S-Krieg, D-Day, Luft, G-Burg, W-100, D-Day, F-40, F-1940, F-1940, F-1940, B-Krieg, T-60, Luft, Midway, R-40. Wish to buy Bismarck, Anzio, Stalingrad, AK semi price. James Lamberts, 2661 Via Del Sol, Mission Viejo, CA 92673, 714-360-5460.

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